Moro rebels agree to resume peace talks

STORY ON PAGE A2

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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PLDT employees get ₱130,000 CBA bonanza

By Raul C. Dancel

EVEN as President Macapagal-Arroyo predicted that job prospects were unlikely to improve soon, the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. yesterday announced that it would give its employees a collective bargaining bonus of P130,000 each, an amount unprecedented in Philippine labor history.

PLDT/ A4

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Stocks hit 2-month low**
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- **PMA hazing suspects charged**
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- **'War of generals' denied**
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- **NBI has new bombing suspects**
  NEWS / A6

Pay hikes, no layoffs for gov't workers

By Gerald G. Lacuarta and Armand N. Nocum

THE COMING elections has prompted Malacañang to offer a 5-percent salary increase to government employees in June and to assure them that no one will be retrenched this year, a complete turnaround from its earlier statements.

President Macapagal-Arroyo also vowed to review "anti-labor" policies such as labor contractualization.

At the Employment Summit in Malacañang, Ms Macapagal yesterday said the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) would submit a supplemental budget to Congress to cover the 5-percent wage increase.

The President said the wage increase would push through even if the government was hard-put in reducing the budget deficit of P225 billion.

But Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said the salary increase would depend on congressional approval of the proposed P10.9-billion supplemental budget in a special session on Monday.

She said the salary increase for some 1.1 million government employees would account for P7.3 billion of the proposed supplemental budget.

"If the budget deficit does not exceed P145 billion, then we would be able to pay the other benefits for government workers," Boncodin told the INQUIRER during an interview at the National Library.

Besides the P7.3-billion allocation for salary increases, P1.9 billion is still needed to pay the un-

PAY/ A20

ROMEO SANTOS

CAUGHT allegedly by surveillance cameras at a German bank, Irene Marcos-Araneta, is back on homeground in Paoay, Ilocos Norte, on Feb. 27.

German cops get evidence on Irene deal

RP envoys in Bern, Berlin coordinating with authorities

By Donna S. Cueto and Blanche S. Rivera

GERMAN investigators "already have all the evidence" that Irene Marcos-Araneta tried to launder Swiss bank deposits allegedly running into billions of dollars through the Deutsche Bank in Dusseldorf, Germany, a Deutsche Bank spokesperson disclosed yesterday.

The official did not specify the form of evidence turned over by the bank to state police investigating the alleged money laundering attempt, but it could include reported bank surveillance video of Irene and husband Gregorio "Greggy" Araneta making transactions in the presence of a Deutsche Bank official.

Asked if the bank was still coordinating with the investigators, press spokesperson Walter Schumacher of Deutsche Bank headquarters in Frankfurt said: "That's finished. We are receiving no more calls. They already have all the evidence."

Philippine envoys to Bern and Berlin are coordinating with Swiss and German authorities to freeze Irene's alleged bank accounts following the INQUIRER's exclusive reports that she tried to launder the funds, Jorge Sarmiento, chairman of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, said yesterday.

Philippine Ambassador to Switzerland Rora Tolentino is scheduled to meet with Swiss officials today in Bern to discuss how the governments can cooperate in the case, Sarmiento told a news conference.

The PCGG has asked the Swiss government to transfer the deposits in the controversial "I. Arenetta" account in the Union Bank of Switzerland to a Philippine bank should the agency confirm the existence of the bank assets, believed to be worth $13.2 billion in 1998.

Sarmiento said his agency had not yet established the existence of the alleged billions, but stressed: "If they can prove there is money and it is ill-gotten and belongs to the Marcoses, then it should be brought here."

In a petition invoking the International Mutual Assistance on

GERMAN/ A20

NDF paves way for release of Maj. Buan

By Carlito Pablo and Delfin T. Mallari Jr.

THE NETHERLANDS-BASED National Democratic Front has ordered a ceasefire in seven Southern Tagalog provinces from March 17 to April 11 to pave the way for the "safe and orderly" release of captive Army Maj. Noel Buan.

Buan is the remaining "prisoner of war" of the NPA.

The other, Chief Insp. Abelardo Martin, former police chief of Dolores, Quezon, was recently killed in what guerrillas claimed was a botched rescue operation in General Nakar town. But the AFP

NDF/ A7

Palace rejects 2 Lopez firms rate increases

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PETITIONS for rate increases by two Lopez-owned companies, Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Electric Co., will be rejected by the Macapagal administration, according to Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo.

"The Cabinet is not agreeable to the Cera (Currency Exchange Rate Adjustment being proposed by Maynilad). They should be content with the EPA or the Extraordinary Price Adjustment," said Romulo,

PALACE/ A21

Money no problem for May 14 elections

₱200M earmarked for special registration; ₱2.4-B Comelec budget released

By Gerald G. Lacuarta, Cathy Yamsuan, Juliet Javellana and Dona Pazzibugan

MONEY is no longer a problem for the Commission on Elections when it holds the May 14 elections and should it conduct a special registration for first-time voters.

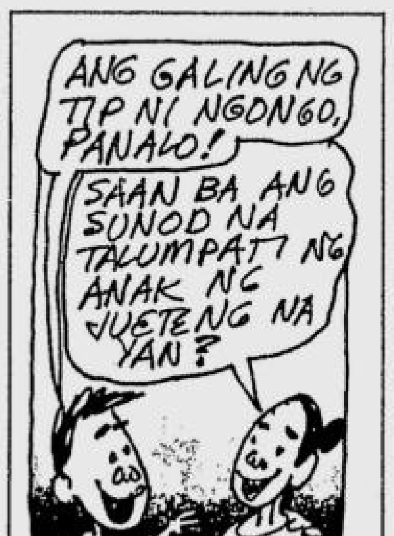
Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin yesterday said that the Department of Budget and Management was prepared to grant the Comelec P200 million for the special registration, or double the amount initially earmarked for the list-up.

Boncodin also said the DBM had already released the entire special election budget of P2.4 billion to the Comelec in the form of P1 billion in cash and P1.4 billion in notice of cash allocation.

The budget secretary said the amount would enable the Comelec to enter into contracts for the purchase of equipment and supplies for the May 14 elections.

A bulk of the budget will be for the per diem of some 480,000 public school teachers who will serve as members of the board of elec-

MONEY/ A20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SAAN BA ANG SUNOD NA TALUMPATI NG ANAK NG JUETENG NA YAN?

Poll bet's gimmick: 'Jueteng' tips

By Bert Basa
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Giving away campaign paraphernalia is apparently too tame a vote-getting tactic for this independent candidate in the

POLL/ A4

Colonel, 9 cops get death for drug bribe

By Volt Contreras

IT WAS the first time capital punishment has been applied for the crime of "qualified bribery" in the Philippines, the judge said.

Also, it was the first time that a high-ranking police officer in the active service was meted out the death penalty.

Ten Quezon City police officers, including a station commander with the rank of superintendent, were sentenced to death yesterday for releasing two suspected Chinese drug traffickers in exchange for a P650,000 bribe.

In an emotional promulgation at the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 95, Judge Diosdado Peralta found Supt. Francisco Ovilla and nine of his men at the Central Police District's Station 9 guilty of qualified bribery and violation of the anti-graft law.

Peralta explained that under the law, a police officer who "refrains from apprehending or prosecuting offenders where the penalty is capital offense, the penalty that will be meted out to them shall be the same as the offenders."

Drug trafficking is punishable by death.

A fuming Peralta noted that the suspected drug traffickers' present whereabouts are unknown. "For all we know, they might be dealing drugs again."

"Police officers should now think many times before committing such acts again. The courts are the pillars of the criminal justice system and we will not allow these things to happen," Peralta said.

COLONEL/ A21

JUDGEMENT day comes for Police Supt. Francisco Ovilla (4th from left) and his nine co-accused at the Quezon City Regional Court Branch 95. (Inset) is presiding Judge Diosdado Peralta.

EDWIN BACASMAS

SANA UMPISA NA ITO NG KAPAYAPAAN !

Second FRONT PAGE

Moro rebs agree to new talks

By Jowel F. Canuday
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front is willing to resume peace talks with the government but has three "concerns" which must be addressed in preliminary discussions.

Undersecretary Jesus Dureza, government peace panel chair, said the MILF central committee in a letter to him Tuesday, raised the three "concerns"—the treatment by both panels of agreements already signed in past peace negotiations, a third-party mediator, and the venue of the talks.

Dureza said the MILF made it clear that the "concerns" raised were "not preconditions" but valid points for discussion that both panels would have to thresh out before formal talks could resume.

A July 1997 general ceasefire agreement between the government and the MILF collapsed after ousted President Joseph Estrada's declared an "all-out war" against the MILF in September 2000.

Although President Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered a suspension of offensive military operations (Somo) against the Muslim separatists, sporadic fighting goes on between the MILF, particularly its breakaway military faction, the Abu Sayyaf, and government troops.

Yesterday, the Associated Press reported that at least 10 Muslim guerrillas and two soldiers were killed in a four-hour battle on the island of Basilan.

Military spokesman Col. Danilo Servando said some 50 members of the Abu Sayyaf attacked an army patrol Wednesday near the remote village of Bolanza.

He said the rebels retreated after suffering heavy losses.

"Troops are still pursuing the rebels in the hinterlands and they will not stop until the terrorists are cornered," Servando told reporters.

The MILF has yet to officially tell the government who will comprise its peace panel.

In a letter to Dureza, however, Lanang Ali, MILF legal counsel, said the Central Committee has authorized him to be its official representative in the preliminary talks.

Ali's letter was written on MILF stationery with the MILF seal.

Dureza said he and Ali agreed to discuss the MILF's "concerns" at a one-on-one meeting next week in Metro Manila.

Dureza reiterated the MILF has not set any preconditions for the talks, contrary to reports quoting Ali Mimbantas, a member of the MILF peace panel, that the separatist group wants the government to return its captured camps and drop all criminal charges against its leaders, including MILF chair Salamat Hashim.

With a report from AP

Palace, Roco uncover P780-M DECS scam

By Blanche S. Rivera

A P780-MILLION scam at the Department of Education, Culture and Sports was foiled after Malacañang refused to honor official papers bearing the forged signature of former Education Secretary Bro. Andrew Gonzalez requesting the release of the funds for the purchase of books and equipment.

Education Secretary Raul Roco summoned DECS regional officials whose signatures appeared on memoranda to President Macapagal-Arroyo and other documents seeking the release of the funds.

The more recent memorandum, dated Jan. 22, and purportedly signed by Gonzalez, sought the release of P357,909,098.08 for the purchase of science and math instructional materials, laboratory equipment and multimedia facilities to be distributed in six regions of the country.

The memo said the DECS offices in Regions V, VI, VII, VIII and IX and the Cordillera Autonomous Region had submitted their requirements that would entail the release of the P358 million.

Gonzalez has denied signing any requests for the release of the money. Roco admitted the DECS has not been able to identify any suspects in the attempt to get the funds.

"What is clear here is that somebody who understands DECS procedures and somebody who understands DBM procedures are communicating with one another," Roco said at his regular press briefing yesterday.

Two other memoranda addressed to Ms Macapagal and dated Jan. 19, the day before she even assumed the presidency, made similar requests but for different amounts.

The first memorandum requested the release of P191,093,750.00 for the purchase of "much-needed elementary and secondary supplementary and reference books, and other instructional materials for the purpose of replacing those damaged… in Mindanao."

The other memorandum sought the release of P231,744,077.98 also for multimedia, science and math equipment for public elementary and high schools in Regions V, VIII and IX.

Both memoranda bore the signature of Gonzalez but were returned by Malacañang to the DECS for further evaluation, at which time the signatures were found to be fake.

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Ombudsman told to answer Allied Bank

By Cathy C. Yamsuan

THE COURT of Appeals has ordered the Office of the Ombudsman to respond to Allied Banking Corp.'s claim that it cannot be compelled to surrender records pertaining to accounts kept by former President Joseph Estrada and his mistresses.

The Ombudsman has been given 10 days to reply to Allied Bank's petition seeking to annul and set aside the Ombudsman's order that the bank surrender the records.

Allied Bank's petition was submitted Wednesday when the 48-hour deadline given by the Ombudsman lapsed.

In particular, the Ombudsman wants the bank to surrender all records pertaining to deposits "in any currency" made by Estrada and his mistresses.

Specified in the Ombudsman's order were the bank records in the name of Estrada, Jose Velarde his alleged alias, Laarni Enriquez, Guia Gomez, Joy Melendrez, Peachy Osorio, Rowena Lopez, Kevin or Kelvin Garcia and the so-called airline accounts identified only as 727, 737, 747, 757, 777 and 858.

In a press statement yesterday, Allied Bank said it was willing to cooperate with the Ombudsman's investigation but stressed that "this must be done within the rules of law to protect the rights of innocent bank clients who may inadvertently be dragged into the issue."

"While ABC is committed to give its full cooperation to any fact-finding investigation by the appropriate government agencies or bureaus, such must be weighed against certain legal restrictions and the bank's paramount responsibility to its client and depositors," the bank's legal department said.

"Any unauthorized and arbitrary disclosure of information . . . will undoubtedly affect with serious gravity the fiduciary relationship between the bank and its clients and may possibly wreak havoc on the banking industry as a whole," it added.

The bank claimed it could not be forced to surrender its records on Estrada and his mistresses, particularly those on their dollar accounts since these are covered by the "absolute confidentiality" clause of the Bank Secrecy Act.

The Ombudsman argued that the provision covers only deposits of non-residents and those who are not engaged in trade or business in the Philippines.

Allied Bank countered however, that no amendments have been made to this clause so far, thus the confidentiality clause remains applicable to "all kinds of foreign currency deposits."

Legal tussle

Allied Bank is one of 12 banks ordered by the Ombudsman on Feb. 8 to submit all bank records and documents pertaining to bank accounts where Estrada allegedly kept his unexplained wealth.

The bank added that the Ombudsman's subpoena failed to connect the relevance of the accounts to its efforts in building its case against Estrada. The petition was the latest in a series of legal maneuvers between the bank and the Ombudsman.

"Such legal tussle may have created an impression that Allied Bank is stonewalling the investigation, but the legal questions it has raised are not only for Allied Bank but for the entire banking industry as well," the bank said.

RM death anniversary tomorrow

THE NATION will mark the 44th death anniversary of the late President Ramon Magsaysay, third president of the Republic of the Philippines, tomorrow.

Magsaysay died in a plane crash in the slopes of Mt. Manunggal in Cebu on a flight back to Manila on March 17, 1957.

The occasion will start with wreath-laying ceremonies at 7 a.m. at the late president's tomb in North Cemetery. This will be led by the Magsaysay family, friends and officers and members of the Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Foundation Inc.

A Mass will be celebrated at 7:15 a.m. at the Sanctuario de San Jose, Greenhills by Father Bong Cabrera.

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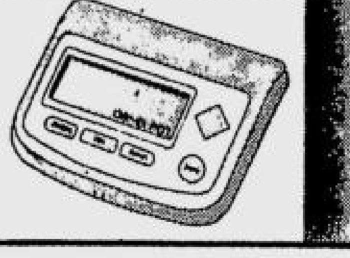

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(From page A1)

May 14 elections.

Suspected "jueteng" financier Melchor Caluag, who is vying for a seat in the city council, has allegedly been providing hints on winning combinations to attract votes, especially from poor residents who patronize the illegal numbers game.

Reports said that at a recent sortie in a village here, Caluag mentioned the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 to his audience.

And the winning combination in the "jueteng" draw during that day was " 23-1."

Caluag—who goes by the alias "Ngongo" and is identified in police records as either Caliuag or Calaguas—reportedly lost more than P200,000 in that draw.

Residents here told the INQUIRER that jueteng personnel had been going around not only to collect bets but also to campaign for Caluag.

A resident said that when he placed his bet, the collector told him: "Ngongo *tayo* (Let's vote for Ngongo)."

Among 30

According to Commission on Elections records, Caluag is among 30 candidates for councilor in Pampanga's capital. Another suspected jueteng financier, Mario Garcia, is running for reelection as councilor under the Lakas-NUCD. Last year, top police officials in Central Luzon suspected Garcia as the jueteng operator in Angeles City and some major towns in Pampanga.

A source at the regional police office in Camp Olivas said Caluag had been on top of jueteng operations in 15 towns in the province, including Lubao, the hometown and reported turf of suspected big-time jueteng financier Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda.

Caluag took advantage of Pineda's absence because of the "Juetengate scandal" last year and operated the illegal numbers game in his former strongholds, a police officer said.

The source also said Caluag had been earning P2 million from a daily gross take of P3 million.

Arrested twice

Senior Supt. Ismael Rafanan, Pampanga police director, said that Caluag was arrested twice—in November 2000 and January 2001—but that he was able to post bail in both cases.

Unlike in heinous crimes, the penalty for offenses related to illegal gambling is not very stiff, Rafanan said.

He said that when arrested, a suspected jueteng financier need only to post bail of P10,000 to obtain temporary freedom, and a jueteng bet collector, only P1,000.

Records from the city police station show that Caluag posted P100,000 in bail for the temporary liberty of 100 bet collectors arrested recently in a week of police raids.

Rafanan aired a warning for Caluag to stop his jueteng operations.

"If he will not stop his illegal activities, he will be taken to court," Rafanan said.

PLDT . . .

(From page A1)

In a news statement, the country's biggest telecommunications company, worth an estimated P120 billion, said it had concluded a new collective bargaining agreement giving each of its 8,067 employees a P130,000 one-time bonus for simply being hired by the firm and a monthly salary increase of close to P5,000 over three years.

The CBA bonanza is broken down into a "lump sum grant" of P100,000 and a P30,000 signing bonus. A spokesman for PLDT said the money would be given to the company's employees this month.

In exchange for the bonus, the union, represented by the Manggagawa ng Komunikasyon sa Pilipinas, agreed to waive a salary increase on the first year of the CBA.

Management said its employees would get a salary increase of P1,900 on the second year of the agreement and P2,650 on the third year.

PLDT president Manuel Pangilinan also granted an extra one-time payment of P3,000 to each union member outside the agreed settlement "in recognition of the speedy and peaceful resolution of the negotiations."

The two sides also reached an agreement on a wide range of benefits, including rice subsidies, death benefits, life insurance, medical and dental services and union leave.

According to PLDT senior vice president Victorico Vargas, negotiations went smoothly since "it was clear that neither side wanted to reach a point where the interests of the employees or the company were threatened because of a disruption."

"This agreement should be seen not only as a welcome development for PLDT but for the Philippines as a whole," Pangilinan said.

Bleak picture

But the President herself painted a bleak picture for most Filipino workers despite general investor euphoria over the ouster of her predecessor Joseph Estrada.

While the foreign exchange has stabilized and investors "have shown keen interest in returning to our shores," Filipinos "cannot expect employment prospects to dramatically improve because we are still in the recovery stage", she said.

Ms Macapagal said under the government's development plan, gross domestic product (GDP) should grow about 4.3 percent this year, with investment rising between 2.8 and 3.9 percent.

This would create "less than a million new jobs" and reduce the unemployment rate to about 10 percent, which she said was "still not a very comforting figure."

She thanked businessmen for their pledge to refrain from laying off workers within the first three months of the year, and expressed hope that this offer could be extended over the next three months.

The unemployment rate stood at 11.2 percent last year amid sharp job losses in the agriculture and industry sectors. The economy further soured amid the "Juetengate" scandal that led to Estrada's ouster two months ago.

With a report from AFP

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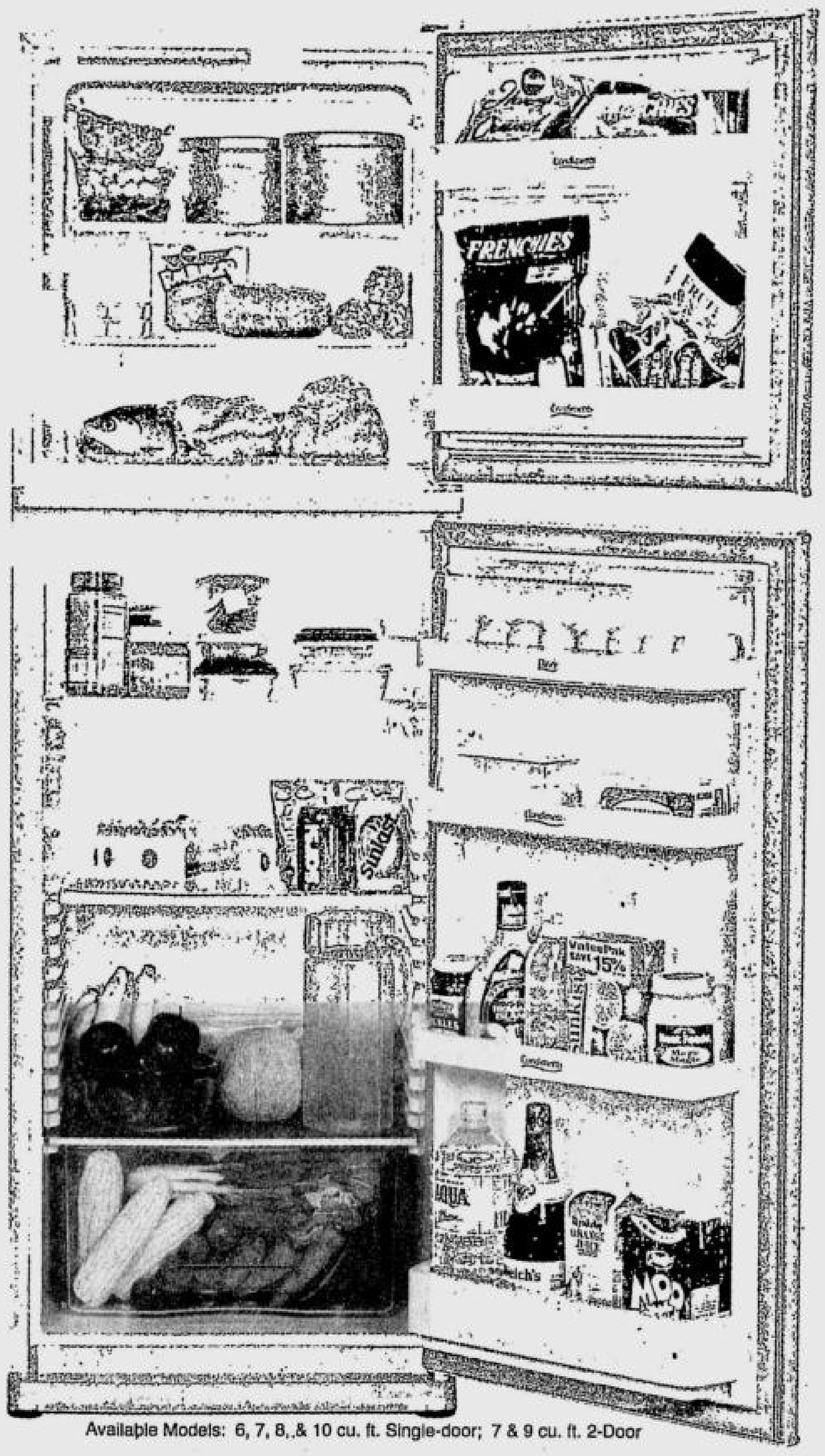

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EIIB abolition an act of vengeance—Courage

By Volt Contreras

OUSTED President Joseph Estrada abolished the Economic Intelligence and Investigation Bureau last year after the anti-smuggling agency crossed one of his mistresses and his son.

The government workers' union Courage said yesterday EIIB agents had discovered that Estrada's mistress Guia Gomez was the alleged "real owner-importer" of 13,000 metric tons of Thai sugar which the EIIB seized for lack of a clearance from the Sugar Regulatory Authority in July 1999.

In a press conference in Quezon City, Courage national president Ferdinand Gaite said Gomez allegedly used as her "front" businesswoman Margarita Sia of the Southeast Asia Sugar Milling Corp. to bring in the sugar shipment through the Iloilo City port on the Korean vessel Chopol 2.

Courage also accused Estrada's son, San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, with "intervening" in a "hot car" case in October 1999 where EIIB operatives were about to seize a luxury vehicle found to have deficient registration papers.

The vehicle—a Mitsubishi Montero—was returned to a Dr. Corazon Borres who, when stopped by the EIIB, reportedly dialed Estrada's number on her cellphone and made the agents talk to the mayor.

The young Estrada later reportedly summoned the EIIB agents to his office in San Juan and instructed them to "coordinate with his office all operations related to the case of missing hot cars. He (Jinggoy) even gave them his calling cards," Gaite said.

Gaite said Courage is preparing to file yet another charge of economic plunder against Estrada using documents and the testimonies of the former EIIB employees.

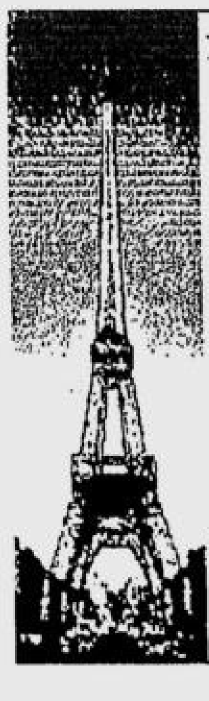
"It has become evident that the abolition of the EIIB by then President Estrada was an act of vengeance for the agency's discovery of smuggling activities linked to his cronies and relatives," said Courage.

As early as December 1999, then President Estrada announced plans to dismantle the EIIB, Gaite said.

He said that after a series of executive orders gradually deactivated the agency, Estrada ordered a police contingent from the National Capital Region command to "take over" the EIIB building in Diliman, Quezon City.

The EIIB employees union in April 2000 questioned Estrada's closure order before the Supreme Court, which has yet to decide on the union's petition.

The Courage suit will be the ninth plunder case to be filed against Estrada since he was deposed in a popular uprising in January. A conviction for plunder carries with it the death penalty.



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  March 17, 2001 Saturday 1:00PM–5:00PM
- HOW TO DELEGATE WORK AND ENSURE IT'S DONE RIGHT
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  March 24, 2001 Saturday 1:00PM–5:00PM
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  March 19 – 26, 2001 M-W-F 6:00PM–9:00PM
- MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVE
  March 19 – 26, 2001 M-W-F 6:00PM–9:00PM
- HOW TO QUALIFY PROSPECTS & HIT THE RIGHT SALES TARGET
  March 17, 2001 Saturday 1:00PM–5:00PM
- CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT
  March 24 – April 7, 2001 Saturday 1:00PM–5:00PM
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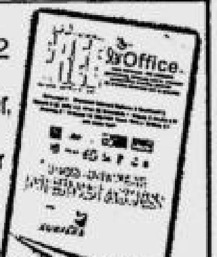

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2. For every roll of film (ANY BRAND) processed at participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops, a customer will get ONE (1) Triple Photo Panalo raffle coupon on which he/she must fill-in his/her NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE/CONTACT NUMBER/S, SIGNATURE, OUTLET/ DEALER, SALESPERSON and drop it at its respective TRIPLE PHOTO PANALO Drop Box in participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops.
3. For purchase of any FUJIFILM or YKL CAMERA, a customer gets a raffle coupon. One (1) raffle coupon per transaction. Customer must fill-in his/her NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE/CONTACT NUMBER/S, SIGNATURE, OUTLET/DEALER, SALESPERSON and drop the coupon in its respective TRIPLE PHOTO PANALO Drop Box in participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops.

C. Rules

1. Promo duration: This promotion will start on January 28, 2001 and will end on June 11, 2001.
2. The GRAND RAFFLE DRAW will be held on June 28, 2001 at Eat Bulaga noontime show, GMA-Channel 7 with the presence of DTI, YKL, and Jimenez D'Arcy representatives.
3. Last day of submission of entries will be on June 11, 2001.
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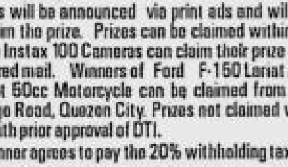
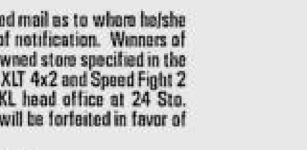
   b. Photofinishing/Developing Category:
      - Two (2) winners of Ford Ranger XLT 4x2 (1-for NCR & REGION 4 and 1-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).
      - Thirty-three (33) winners of Fujifilm Instax 100 cameras & film (16-for NCR & REGION 4 and 17-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).
   c. Camera Category:
      - Two (2) winners of Speed Fight 2 Peugeot 50cc Motorcycle (1-for NCR & REGION 4 and 1-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).
      - Thirty-four (34) winners of Fujifilm Instax 100 cameras & film (17-for NCR & REGION 4 and 17-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).
6. A winner can only win once. If a name is drawn more than once, he/she gets the bigger prize in all categories. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
7. Winners shall be asked to present their claim stub portion of the raffle coupon (for photofinishing and camera category) and any of the following identification papers (School/company ID, driver's license, any ID with picture).
8. Employees of YKL, Jimenez D'Arcy and participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops and their representatives, including relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promo.
9. Winners will be announced via print ads and will be notified by registered mail as to where he/she can claim the prize. Prizes can be claimed within 60 days from receipt of notification. Winners of Fujifilm Instax 100 Cameras can claim their prize at corresponding YKL owned store specified in the registered mail. Winners of Ford F-150 Lariat A/T 2000, Ford Ranger XLT 4x2 and Speed Fight 2 Peugeot 50cc Motorcycle can be claimed from Mr. Sonny Teves at YKL head office at 24 Sto. Domingo Road, Quezon City. Prizes not claimed within the given period will be forfeited in favor of YKL. with prior approval of DTI.
10. The winner agrees to pay the 20% withholding tax on prizes more than P10,000.





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Erap magic still works, bishop warns

By Norman Bordadora

THE PRESIDENT of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines yesterday said "Erap magic" still worked in Mindanao and could prove costly for senatorial candidates of the People Power Coalition unless they learned how to mingle with the common people.

Cotabato Archbishop Orlando Quevedo said many Mindanaoans still believed disgraced President Joseph Estrada as genuinely pro-poor and would heed his request that they vote for candidates of the opposition Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Puwersa ng Masang Pilipino which he backed.

He said sorties of the LDP-PnM in the area were generally warmly received by the people and that he expected "senatoriables" of the opposition to post a strong showing in precincts of Mindanao.

"Many of the People Power candidates are genuinely pro-poor but the people of Mindanao don't see that. I suggest that they do what the former President does when he goes on campaign sorties. (The administration candidates) should also eat with their hands with the common folk," Quevedo told reporters.

"Be among the people. Be among the poor," he told candidates of the administration coalition.

Though the CBCP played significant role in the People Power II that catapulted President Macapagal-Arroyo to power, it had earlier advised the Catholic faithful to look beyond the candidates of the administration in their votes.

"There are other Edsa heroes outside of the People Power Coalition," said Msgr. Hernando Coronel, CBCP media director.

While many Mindanaoans suffered from the all-out war policy of the Estrada administration against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Quevedo said, a good number of residents saw Estrada's attack on Camp Abubakar and other MILF strongholds as an act of courage for the people.

PNP chief denies 'war' of generals

THE ACTING chief of the Philippine National Police yesterday disputed reports that a "brewing war" was simmering between his class at the Philippine Military Academy and its underclass and suggested the report could be politically motivated.

PNP Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza was reacting to reports that factions of PMA Class '69 and Class '70 were engaged in discrediting each other before President Macapagal-Arroyo as both maneuvered to get juicy positions in the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the PNP and other government offices.

Most of the top brass in the AFP and the PNP belong to both classes.

Mendoza, member of PMA Class '69, confirmed that the class, led by class president Lt. Gen. Benjamin Defensor, indeed saw President Macapagal Tuesday night in what he described as a "very fruitful meeting."

However, he said, the class was only making a courtesy call on the President, adding that discussions revolved mainly on golf handicaps.

Mendoza denied allegations that he was not on speaking term with Director Hermogenes Ebdane, chief of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force.

Dave Veridiano

NBI has new set of bombing suspects

POLICE investigating the deadly bombings across Metro Manila at the end of last year have detained a fresh set of suspects, the National Bureau of Investigation said yesterday.

All three suspects are Muslims but there is no evidence linking them to any of the Islamic separatist guerrilla groups in the south, NBI chief Reynaldo Wycoco told reporters.

Twenty-two people were killed and more than 100 others were injured when powerful explosions hit the airport, the light railway system, a bus, and two open areas in Metro Manila within an hour of each other on Dec. 30.

Wycoco said two of the suspects, whom he did not identify, had confessed to taking part in the bombings. The third suspect, Diamlan Bassal Diamlan, has not owned up to anything, he added.

AFP

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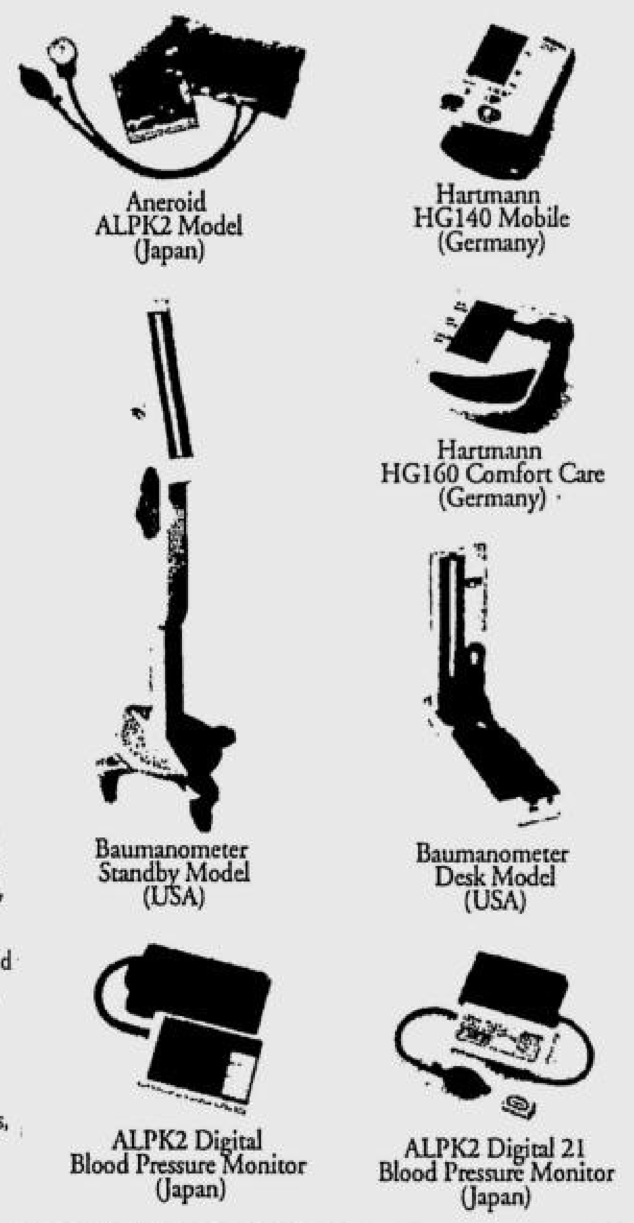

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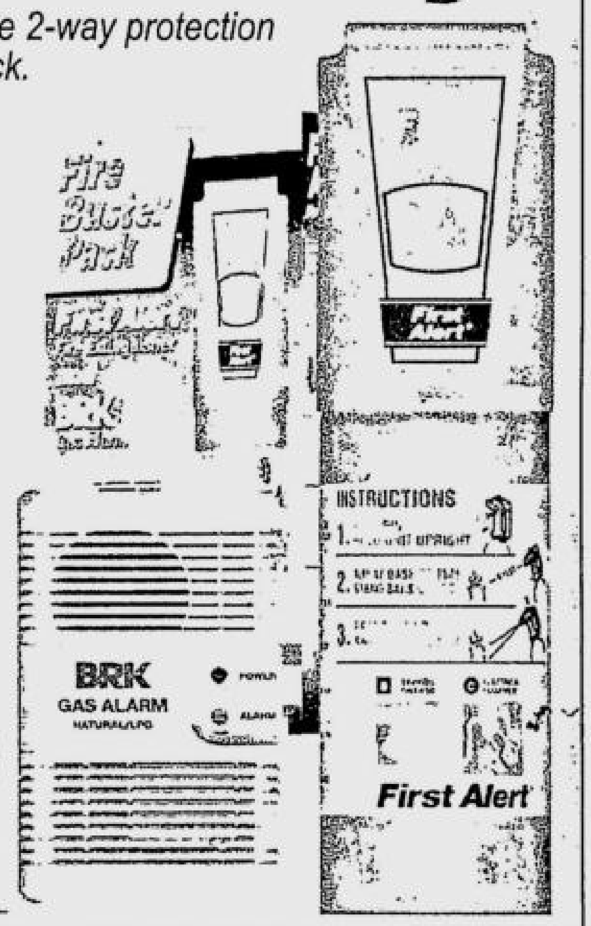

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NDF paves way for release of Maj. Buan

(From page A1)

maintained that it was a chance encounter.

Luis Jalandoni, chair of the NDF peace negotiating panel, issued the ceasefire order to the Southern Tagalog Regional Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Melito Glor Command of the CPP's armed wing, the New People's Army.

Jalandoni said in a statement and note e-mailed to the INQUIRER yesterday that the order for Buan's release would be issued today.

The ceasefire covers the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon, and Occidental and Oriental Mindoro.

Jalandoni said NPA and "people's militia" units in these areas would "adopt defensive positions" for the duration of the ceasefire.

He said this was in compliance with Part IV of the Jan. 12 memorandum of understanding between the NDF and the humanitarian and peace mission of Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste, Bishop Jesus Varela and Supreme Bishop Tomas Millamena, in connection with Buan's release.

Buan, an intelligence officer, has been held by the NPA Melito Glor Command since his abduction in 1999.

The NDF had earlier agreed to release him as part of confidence-building measures ahead of the peace talks with the government scheduled to start on April 27.

The ceasefire order of the NDF reciprocates the March 12-April 11 suspension of offensive military operations declared by President Macapagal-Arroyo in 11 Southern Tagalog provinces.

The Philippine National Police had also announced a similar suspension of offensive operations from March 17 to April 11.

Possible extension

Jalandoni said that based on the assurance given by the President to the NDF through Legarda, the duration of the mutual ceasefire might be extended up to April 17, "if deemed necessary and demanded by the Melito Glor Command at the end of March."

He said the NDF was now making arrangements for Buan's release with the CPP Southern Tagalog Regional Committee, the Melito Glor Command, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the humanitarian and peace mission, the government peace panel and other concerned parties.

"Despite the mutual ceasefire, the NPA people's militia and self-defense units of mass organizations in the Calabarzon and Mindoro provinces must remain vigilant and must never let down their guard against state terrorism and treachery of the enemy forces," Jalandoni said.

He also called on the Armed Forces and the PNP to abide by their own ceasefire orders, saying the Melito Glor Command had been authorized to abort Buan's release "if at any time there is any violation" of the ceasefire.

Cause of delay

Jalandoni said the NDF ceasefire order had been "delayed unnecessarily" by the PNP's "belated issuance" of the order suspending offensive operations.

He also cited the "previous lack of clarity" on the issue of whether the President's ceasefire order was sufficient in the absence of a similar order by the AFP Chief of Staff, Gen. Angelo Reyes.

He said the NDF had deemed that Ms Macapagal's ceasefire order as Commander in Chief was in itself "sufficient and superior" to that of Reyes.

Fr. Raul Enriquez, chair of the Social Action Desk of the Diocese of Lucena, urged the faithful in Quezon province to monitor the observance of the ceasefire in their respective areas.

"Be involved in its faithful implementation," Enriquez said, adding:

"If no one makes a stand for peace, if we continue to remain bystanders to this God-given chance to once more work for peace, the next generation of Filipinos will probably be transformed into mean and callous citizens by the violence around them." "And if that happens," Enriquez warned, "pray that we will all survive."

In the country

Acting Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the government was inclined to hold the scheduled peace negotiations with the NDF in the country because the issues affecting both camps were local in nature.

Ermita said in a interview aired over radio station dzMM that in holding the talks here, the country would also be upholding its sovereignty and national integrity.

He pointed out that when talks were held outside the Philippines, communist groups were always quick to raise the issue of belligerency, which was supposed to confer on them political and military clout.

"The status of belligerency always crops up. But what we would like to emphasize is that these talks are between groups (whose members) are all Filipinos. That is why the talks should not be held outside of the country," said Ermita, who also serves as the President's adviser on the peace process.

He was reacting to the earlier statement of Jose Ma. Sison, chief political consultant of the NDF peace panel, that the negotiations should be held in a "neutral venue."

Ermita noted that the issues and problems being raised by the NDF were rooted here in the country.

"The problems affecting us are here in the Philippines. It is just right that we meet here," he said.

"If what they claim is true—that they represent the Filipino masses—they should agree to holding the talks here," he added.

Ermita also said government negotiators would push hard for the holding of the talks here.

"In doing so, we just want to prove that the problem we have is domestic in nature," he said.

Cabinet Cluster E, the panel in charge of political and security issues, would make the final decision on the venue of the talks.

Earlier, the President said she would await the results of a Cabinet study before deciding on the matter. *With a report from Armand N. Nocum*

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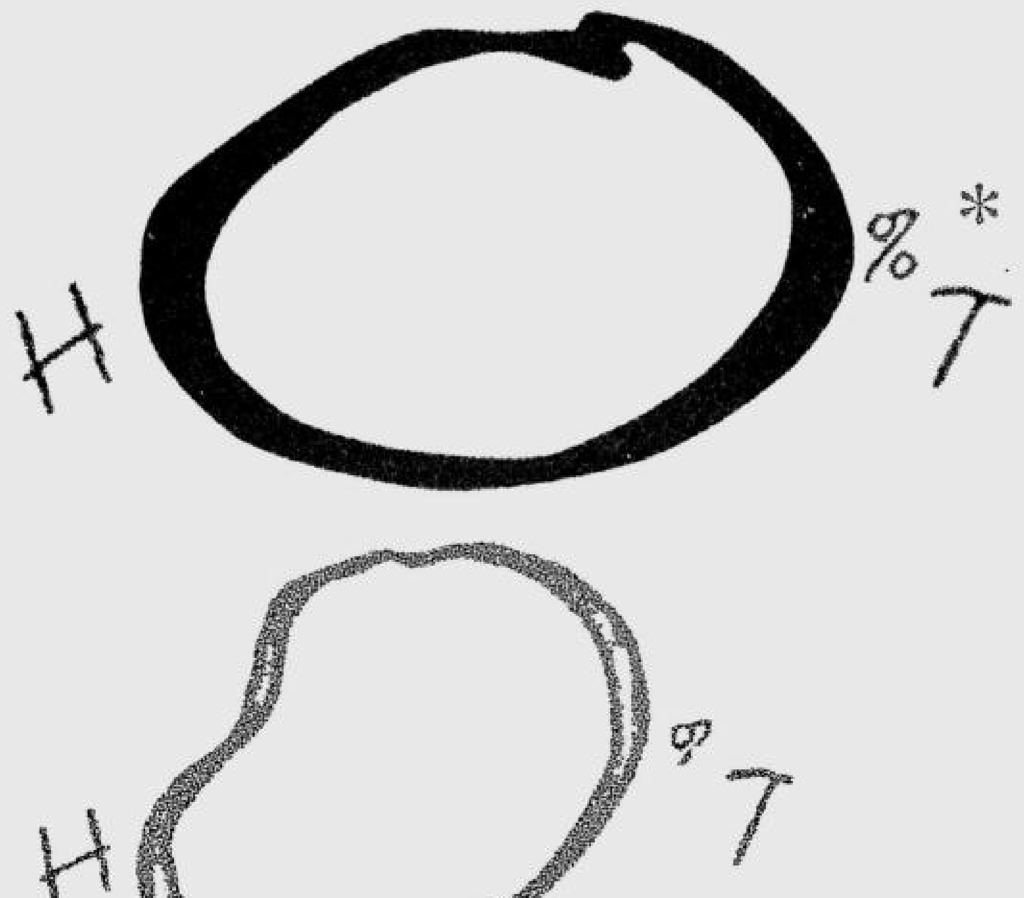

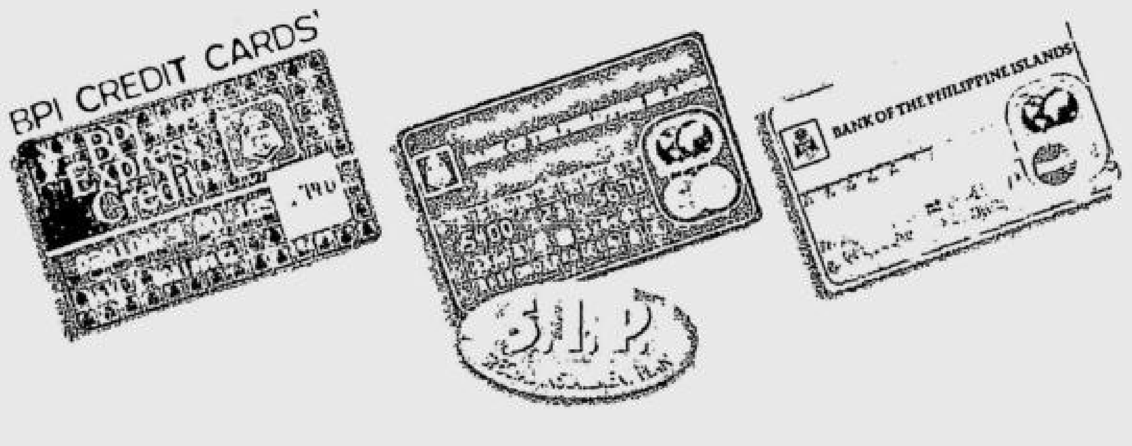
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OPINION

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EDITORIALS

Death

A PALL has been cast over an occasion that should otherwise be the happiest in the world. On March 25, the Philippine Military Academy will hold its graduation ceremonies, an affair that has traditionally been the cynosure of the nation's eyes. Some 195 young men—and women, the PMA now includes them in its ranks—who count among the country's best and brightest, will march to receive their diploma from the prestigious academy. They will soon become the country's military and law enforcement elite.

They will not include Cadet Edward Domingo. Or since Domingo was a junior, they will not include him next year, or any year after that. Domingo is dead, no thanks to his senior fellows, several of whom beat him to death in a hazing ritual. His mother appeared on TV several days ago recalling that he was a thoughtful boy who vowed to pluck his family out of hardship. He won't be doing that as well.

Idiotic as the practice is, and horrendously wasteful of human life, not to speak of talent, hazing persists to this day, and to an alarming extent. Of course it doesn't happen in the PMA alone, it happens as well in the country's most prestigious academic institutions like the University of the Philippines and the Ateneo. Indeed, ironically in the latter case, in its law school, which should say something about why the law is what it is in this country. It doesn't happen in the PMA alone, but it happens plentifully there. It has got to stop.

The best way to do it is to punish the guilty, as harshly as their crime deserves. If hazing persists, it is also because the people who wreak it get away unscathed even when it produces fatal consequences. Senior Supt. Villamor Bumanlag, Baguio police director, who leads the investigation into Domingo's death, and is a member of PMA Class 1979, exults that this is the first time civilian authorities have been allowed to handle a case involving military cadets. What is there to investigate? The case is fairly cut and dried, the culprits having confessed to the crime. The problem is not finding the truth, it is doing something about it.

That's been the bane of this country so far: The law tends to look in the other direction when the criminals—for that is what they are, the word "manslaughter" captures their deed magnificently—are deemed to be "promising." No one among those who murdered Lenny de Villa has been jailed. The last time we looked, one of them was even serving as an Erap adviser. That government was truly full of gangsters.

A long time ago, the court also found a man named Ferdinand Marcos innocent of murdering his father's political rival. The reason for it was not Marcos' eloquence or brilliance—that is myth—but that the legal and political luminaries at that time found it wasteful to nip in the bud the career of one so promising. *Sayang*, they said.

Years later, he declared martial law and unleashed lawlessness upon the land.

And violence

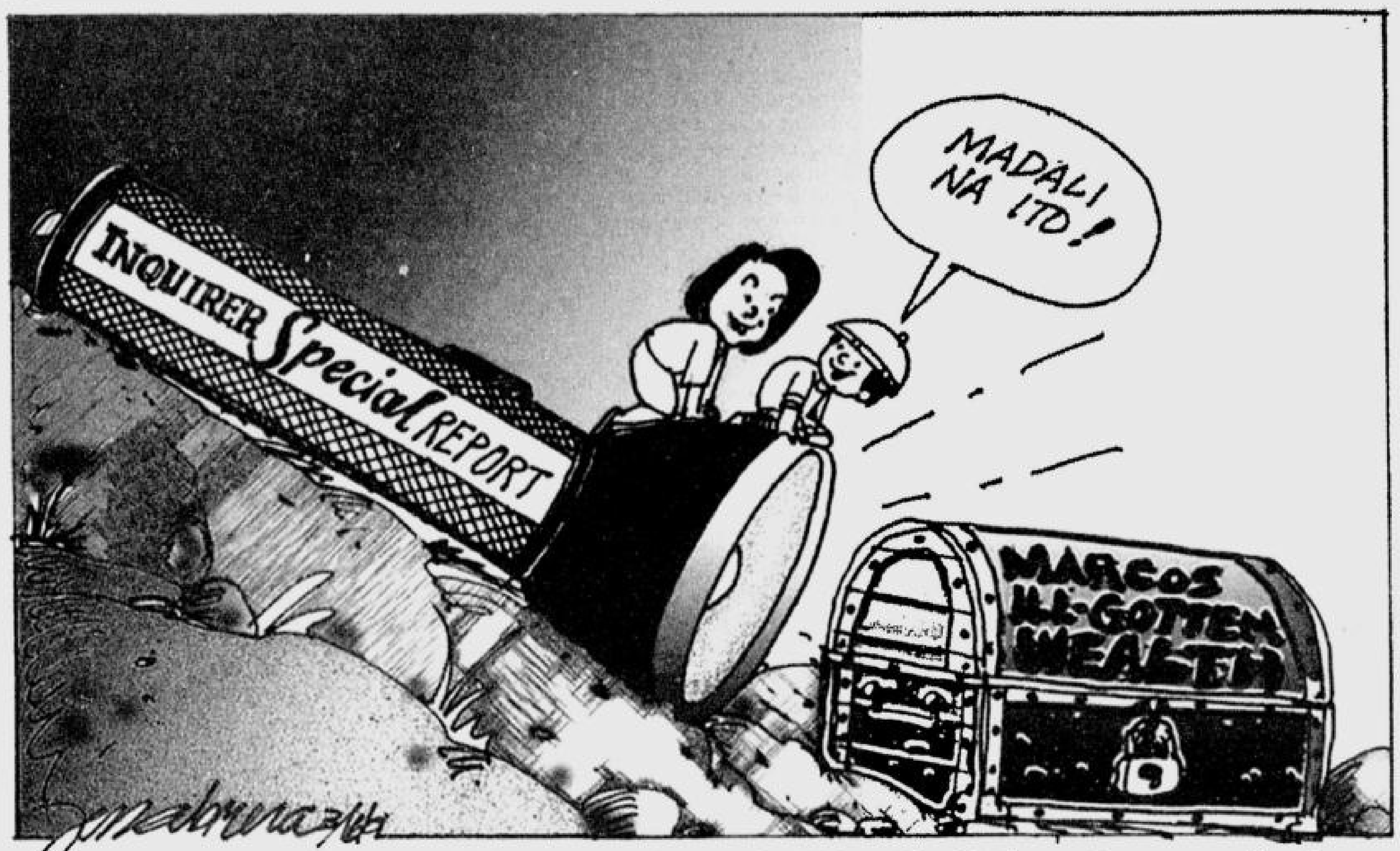
MAJ. Gen. Manuel Carranza Jr., PMA superintendent, says they are applying stricter standards before admitting applicants. Class 2005 in particular will be smaller because they just weeded out the applicants who passed the exams but failed to pass the neuro-psychological test. They were found to harbor abnormally violent tendencies.

That's all very well for Class 2005. But what about the classes that came before? How many people with abnormally violent tendencies are currently cadets in the PMA, or worse have graduated from it and been let loose upon the land? It must say something about why the military and law enforcement agency are not this country's favorite institutions.

But it's not just the individual psychos that are worrisome, it's also the culture of violence that addles the brains of the normal cadets that's so. Hazing and the other violent rituals they practice in military school do tend to mold minds. You subject impressionable minds to a constant barrage of violence, while extolling its virtue, and you are going to produce the same effects on those minds as "mad cow" disease.

The usual arguments for hazing and the other violent rituals are that they are tradition and that they breed the highest levels of comradeship or brotherhood. Well, not all traditions should be kept, as "Fiddler on the Roof" so clearly shows. Sick ones ought to be jettisoned at once, and you can't get any tradition sicker than hazing. And a comradeship or brotherhood forged on the smithy of ill-will or muderousness is not a thing to be hailed, it is a thing to be feared.

We are going to put guns in the hands of these people so that they may defend us. We allow them to wallow in a culture of violence, and we will only make sure they will point their guns at us.



Is GMA now raiding ranks of CS eligibles for spoils?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WITH EACH change of president, the spoils system in the Philippines grows worse. Previously, the spoils were only the Cabinet positions. Undersecretaries and bureau directors were not touched because they were the career officials who kept the government machinery working while the new Cabinet members learned the ropes. But new presidents had to give more spoils to their supporters and followers and so the undersecretaries, too, became fair game. With each succeeding administration, the spoils system grew worse, reaching lower and lower into the career service. The administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is the worst so far. The spoils of politics has reached civil service eligibles.

Ironically, it was Ms Macapagal who introduced the term "new politics" early in her term, meaning she would change the bad practices of the "old politics." From the very start of her administration, the President kept repeating in her speeches that she will respect and protect the civil service. Not true, it seems.

Let us take one example. Director General Ramon Ike V. Señeres of the National Computer Center (NCC). Ike has two third level civil service eligibilities, namely the Career Service Executive Eligibility (CSEE) and the Career Executive Service (CES) Eligibility. He has already completed the CSEE, but his conferment of a CES rank is still awaiting the signature of the President. But he has already passed all the difficult steps in qualifying for a Ceso.

Despite his double-barrel qualifications, Ike was effectively replaced last March 2, when the President signed the appointment of a Dr. Delfin Jay. M. Sabido as director of the NCC. On March 8, Senior Deputy Executive Secretary Waldo Q. Flores signed a transmittal letter to the NCC informing it of the appointment.

"I had no prior knowledge about the appointment of Dr. Sabido," Ike wrote to Civil Service Commissioner Karina David asking for guidance, assistance and intercession in upholding his security of tenure. "There was no attempt on the part of Malacañang to inform me that someone has already been appointed in my place. In fact, I only came to know about the appointment after I got hold of a copy from a third party."

The law says no civil service eligible can be dismissed without due cause and due process. Ike has not been adjudged guilty of any offense. Neither has he resigned. There is no notice that he has been terminated. He is not co-terminus with President Estrada. Therefore, Ike is still in the civil service. But he has not been transferred or reassigned. And anyway, the Election Code now prohibits the transfer or reassignment of government employees.

He cannot be "floated" either, because that would be tantamount to being removed without cause or due process. Neither can he be demoted because that would be in violation of the CSC rules and regulations.

"I would like the guidance of the CSC as to what I should do," Ike wrote Ms David. "Since I could neither be transferred nor reassigned, the only remaining option perhaps is to promote me. If the administration will not be in a position to offer a promotion, which is the only legal alternative at this point, the only remaining practical option perhaps is to revoke or rescind the appointment of Dr. Sabido and consequently, to uphold or affirm my tenure."

Only last Jan. 15, the Career Executive Service Board recommended to the Office of the President. Ike's appointment to a Ceso rank. On Jan. 31, he asked the CESB whether he is required to tender a courtesy resignation because a new administration has taken over. The CESB replied on Feb. 5 that he is not yet a full Ceso but that the Santos vs. Cuevas case may be applicable to him, wherein it states that CES eligibles "belong to a class of civil servants who may only be removed for cause and after due process."

CSC Resolution No. 364789 states that "the foremost objective of the CSEE is to establish a pool of eligibles to third level positions on a permanent status so that they could enjoy security of tenure upon appointment to such position."

"I am interpreting this provision," wrote Ike, "to mean that security of tenure on a permanent status applies to positions, i.e. the position of the incumbent."

CSC Resolution No. 981940 states that "A CES/CSEE eligible who occupies a position classified as belonging to the CES enjoys security of tenure, is not required to vacate his office and can be removed only for cause and after due process."

Now, why did the President appoint somebody to a position that is not vacant, a position occupied by Ike who cannot be removed legally without due cause or due process? Is she running out of jobs to distribute as spoils to supporters? My guess is that the President was not aware of all the facts. You know how it is in most government offices: piles of documents are shoved in front of the boss for signing who has no time to read them all. How many documents were signed by bosses who were not fully aware of what they were signing? Maybe Sabido is a protégé of a Malacañang factotum.

The Sabido appointment could even be spurious or smuggled. It showed signs that the appointment did not go through the usual process, or at the very least, was rushed under unusual circumstances. For one, the letter did not bear the usual marks that would have authenticated the document such as hologram and bar code. Even so, it may be authentic, but what does that make of the repeated pronouncements of President Macapagal that she would respect and protect the rights of civil servants? It does not speak well of her sincerity.

But then again, it could have been just a simple mistake. In which case, Malacañang should rectify the error by recalling the appointment of Dr. Sabido.

Chesterton's faith

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican

KIDNAPPING, somnolent under the Estrada administration, is back with a vengeance. In the month and a half since the new administration and the new PNP leadership assumed office, there have been at least nine known kidnappings. This listing does not include unreported ones, especially in the provinces. This past week, two of those victims, both UP students, were ruthlessly executed by their captors. Perhaps it is now time to listen more closely to what Teresita Ang-See and Karina Agarao have been complaining about.

The case of these two victims is particularly worrying because after the family dutifully reported the kidnapping to the police, the kidnappers called back to tell the family that they knew of it and that they would pay the price for their cooperation with the authorities. They did, in full measure.

This pattern of resurgent crime and supreme arrogance can lead to only one possible conclusion: the police are once again involved in the business of kidnapping and murder. And it isn't just a business but a sunrise industry. Expect more of the same. And don't expect any of the victims' families to repeat the tragic mistake of reporting these crimes to the police.

The death of these two young innocents poses a challenge to the PNP chief, Gen. Leandro Mendoza, and to the NBI director, Gen. Reynaldo Wycoco. If they, unlike their predecessors, cannot in short order stamp out the kidnapping syndicates and arrest those responsible for these gruesome crimes, a public clamor will quickly mount to replace them with others who can. And what matter their explanations before the eloquent silence of the victims' tombs?

The authorities who are still basking in the glow of Edsa II may underestimate the growing public unease over the worsening crime spree. But it may profit them to remember that it was the death of two young students at the hands of the cohorts of Mayor Sanchez that galvanized public opinion to compel the authorities to finally do something about the Master of Calauan. And what good is a revolution if it can't save its children?

Part of the problem is that the authorities project themselves as more concerned about the past than about the future. Justice Secretary Nani Perez appears daily in media, but only to ceaselessly talk about the Erap cases. That is very important, but certainly not to the apparent exclusion of all else. The result is that the justice secretary projects as less that than as secretary to jail Erap. That is an unsustainable posture in the long run.

Similar problems abound in other law enforcement agencies. If you believe the media, the NBI seems more concerned about daily speculations on the Bubby Dacer disappearance and similar cases than in actually catching—and convicting—the culprit. Contrariwise, the FBI and other professional anti-crime agencies abroad normally work silently collecting evidence before making arrests, only after which announcements follow.

Part of the reason for that tactic is to avoid tipping off the criminal about exactly what it is the authorities know, or don't know. Part of it is because successful detective work is, by nature, painstaking and even tedious. Those who believe otherwise have seen too many Perry Mason television shows. Finally, part of it is also because trial by publicity is as apt to catch the innocent as it is to punish the guilty.

And although it may not be true, the resultant impression, or misimpression, has been created that the NBI is only interested in cases that will implicate or discredit Panfilo Lacson in this political season and that it is not going to pour similar resources in less politicized cases. That impression, if carried on, is going to be devastating for the NBI and the administration.

This posture may also be giving career criminals the impression that they have a good chance of getting away with crimes because the government is principally focused upon and devoting resources on anti-Erap type cases. It may therefore be inadvertently contributing to the current crime wave.

None of this should suggest that any genuine cases or leads should be dropped or soft-pedalled. Dacer's case cries out for a solution and the trail of evidence should be followed wherever it leads. But will the DOJ, for instance, pursue with equal zeal corruption cases committed in the past by allies of the administration? Or will it devote equal time and effort to the eradication of criminal syndicates?

After the initial few months of the new administration, the DOJ and other law enforcement agencies have proven their point that they are serious about prosecuting malfeasance in the Estrada administration. They should now show that they are equally serious about bringing to justice all other sorts of lawbreakers. It may be more a public relations failure than reality, or it may not, but they have not bridged this transition well.

This killing of the two UP students gives them an opportunity to correct or balance that misimpression, if it is one. If the justice secretary, the PNP chief, and the NBI director, among others, aren't getting their blood pressures up on this news, then there is something seriously wrong with them. If their pressure is up, then they should do something exemplary about this. For it is the type of crime that puts to the test the resolve of even the toughest opponent of the death penalty.

The people who cold-bloodedly kidnapped and killed two young people won't stop there. And there are countless others, young and old, who are now naked to these criminals. We still have faith our authorities will solve these crimes. We hope we do not possess that kind of faith defined by the writer G. K. Chesterton as "the ability to believe that which is demonstrably untrue."

Tong, Dick and hairy

COMMENTARY

Leandro V. Coronel

WHAT'S wrong with this statement: "I'm not saying this is true, but this is what my friends told me...It is to the effect that [William] Gatchalian's hotels will be transformed into casinos...This information definitely came from people I have known in the golf community."

What's wrong? Here's a clue. The speaker is Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio. The subject is an alleged P500-million loan from ousted President Joseph Estrada to his friend Gatchalian, reportedly to convert the Davao Insular Hotel into a gambling house.

What's wrong? What business does a government official charged with looking into citizens' complaints throwing morsels of hearsay to the media? The clincher is that the information "definitely came from people I have known in the community." Are we serious in this country or what? Is the golf course now a source of credible information on possible criminal activity? If the sources were legitimate, why not identify them as such instead of as golfers? And doesn't Gervacio know that tall tales on the golf links made the fisherman's boast about the one that got away sound like kid stuff?

The other whopper is that Gervacio (yes, the one with all the hair; I myself have very little but I don't envy him) said he wasn't sure of the accuracy of his information. If he wasn't sure, then what was his business tattling to the press about hearsay? One of our problems in this country is this penchant of public officials to shoot off their mouths with unverified information.

I'm no fan of Gatchalian, I don't even know him, nor he me. But this case is an example of an inexcusable lapse in judgment by an official holding a sensitive position.

Another public servant who's back in the news with a vengeance is Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon. Unfortunately, little Dick's escapade this time didn't have anything to do with tourism. Or maybe it did, in the sense that it served to give the Philippines another black eye on the international scene.

Reportedly, Gordon and his wife, Mayor Kate of Olongapo, instigated a barricading of the Subic Freeport as part of their continuing contretemps with Subic boss Felicito "Tong" Payumo. The first day of the barricade by protesting Subic employees was timed with the inauguration of a Japanese lumber processing plant.

Why can't the Gordons let go of their obsession with Subic? It's hard to understand their proprietary interest in the freeport zone as if they owned it. President Macapagal should tell Gordon to cool it and concentrate instead on drumming up tourist arrivals instead of dredging up his quarrel with turf rival Payumo.

But it's not likely that Ms Macapagal will lift an impartial finger in this brouhaha. In fact, the President has complicated the matter. Ms Macapagal reportedly wants Rear Adm. Guillermo Wong, recently retired summarily, to head the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority but "she respects the fixed tenure" of Payumo. Ms Macapagal declared Wong "a strong possibility" for the post, "if Tong is willing to resign in his favor."

Read that quote again: "If Tong is willing to resign in his favor." That, at the very least, was a hint for Payumo to quit. But more than a simple hint, it was an unethical remark. If Payumo holds a fixed tenure of office, then he should be allowed to carry on with his work. If there's cause to fire him, then fire him. But to goad him to resign, even though he has a tenure and is not in hot water for any irregularity, is unethical and worse, an abuse of power.

Why should Payumo resign (again, I don't know him, but I could tell him from Dick Gordon)? It is hairy Gervacio who should resign for making irresponsible, unconfirmed statements.

Unfortunately, it's the wrong people who are forced to resign in this country. Look at Wong. He delivered bad news—possible corruption in the Navy—and he got his head cut off for it. That, unfortunately, is often the fate of whistle-blowers: demotion, dismissal, ostracism by peers and, sometimes, something permanently harmful to the person's health.

Wong's executioner was *balimbing*, fortunately outgoing, Armed Forces Chief of Staff. Gen. Angelo Reyes, who has arm-twisted Wong into retiring prematurely. Meanwhile, Reyes has gagged Wong so the latter can't wash the military's dirty linen in public.

The new administration has no business pressuring people out of their jobs simply because they were appointed by previous administrations. The President and her people shouldn't go around hinting that so and so should resign, simply because they have someone else in mind for the incumbent's position. I guess this is part of the political orthodoxy of "to the victor, the spoils." But governments shouldn't go overboard, dispensing with decency, by greedily helping themselves or their friends to positions even if they're still occupied.

Ms Macapagal should know this, being an advocate of morality in government. She should restrain herself and her associates from grabbing every spoil in sight. She shouldn't hint (which comes off as a threat, coming from the President) at officeholders to resign just so she could accommodate those she wants to please or appease. She can't simply tell people to go and then replace them with her own Tong, Dick and hairy.

The President should beware that she's beginning to look, wittingly or otherwise, like an empire-builder. She should be wary of the potential pitfalls of such an enterprise. Many an ambitious leader has fallen flat on his face for being overeager, overbearing and overambitious.

Leandro V. Coronel, a former spokesperson for the World Bank, now lives and writes here.

Ahead of the parade

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WHEN President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo spoke before a regional gathering of reproductive health professionals and advocates, she said that her administration "needs to adopt policies that will take into consideration population and reproductive health approaches that respect our culture and values and respect equality between men and women."

Immediately, the media, including this paper, concluded that Ms Macapagal was "toeing" the line of the Catholic hierarchy, which has maintained its staunch opposition to modern forms of contraception and insists that only natural family planning methods are acceptable. Because Filipinos are predominantly Catholic, most everyone assumes Philippine "culture and values" would reflect the thinking and sentiments of Catholic Church leaders. But is this so?

Not if you go by the results of a recent nationwide public opinion survey on public perception and attitudes on family planning and reproductive health. Conducted by respected polling institution Pulse Asia, the survey tracked continuing popular support for the right of couples, but especially of women, to make reproductive choices.

Nine out of 10 or 94 percent of respondents said it is important "to have the ability to control one's fertility or plan one's family." In addition, an overwhelming majority (94 percent of those with children, 92 percent of those without) believe that family planning is important.

Filipinos also exhibit a high awareness of the various methods of contraception, revealing the most awareness about condoms (95 percent) and the least (82 percent) about injectables. The survey is silent, though, on whether this awareness translates into actual practice.

Pulse Asia head Prof. Felipe Miranda notes that that "agreement with the view that family planning is important is not sensitive to one's socio-economic status, gender, employment and educational attainment. This opinion is also not sensitive to whether or not one has any children and whether or not one has studied in a sectarian school." In other words, rich or poor, schooled or unschooled, man or woman, Filipinos believe in and support family planning and reproductive health.

* * *

BECAUSE the survey findings were coming out around election time, the survey designers asked the 1,200 respondents whether they would vote for candidates who publicly support a family planning and reproductive health policy.

The finding? A majority (76 percent) said they would support candidates who speak out in favor of family planning, while only 4 percent said they would not. Twenty percent of the respondents remained undecided on the issue. Surprisingly, those most in favor of candidates supporting family planning come from the lowest economic classes and the youngest respondents.

Pulse Asia found that the majority of voters (respondents were all 18 years old and above) will support candidates who are in favor of: couples' free choice of family planning methods (69 percent), a law or measure on population issues (71 percent), a government budget for family planning (74 percent), and a program on women's health (80 percent).

To candidates for senator, members of Congress, or even local government posts, here's an entire legislative and action agenda right under your noses!

* * *

AND it's not as if this is new or startling information. In fact, it's a decade old.

The findings of this survey, conducted as part of the December 2000 Ulat ng Bayan, "validate the results of a 1991 survey on family planning and population," which revealed at that time that nearly all Filipinos (96 percent) say it is important to have the ability to control one's fertility or plan one's family. To a large extent, Pulse Asia concludes, "the views of Filipinos on issues having to do with family planning and population have not changed significantly in almost a decade."

Which brings me to the question of whom does government—including legislators and the executive—listen to? If we go by the survey findings, we should have by now a strong, unequivocal government policy promoting reproductive rights and health, and respecting every person's right to have control over his or her fertility. But is this what we have in place, especially under the Macapagal administration?

I was asked to be a reactor to the presentation of this and another survey (on legislators' attitudes to reproductive health issues) sponsored by The Futures Group and the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development Foundation (PLCPD). Apart from pointing out the apparent "deafness" of government officials on this issue, I also noted that perhaps it was also the result of the way the media keep presenting the issue, as that of a tug-of-war between Church and State. In reality, it is a struggle between big institutions such as Church and State, and the people, especially women, asserting their individual human right to control their fertility and plan their family.

* * *

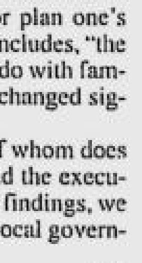
ANOTHER reactor at the forum, Rep. Crisel Lagman-Luistro of Albay, pointed out that a crucial aspect of the problem is "the lack of funds to support a family planning and reproductive health program." The Philippine government, it must be pointed out, is still largely dependent on foreign donors for contraceptive supplies. But lately, these aid agencies have been making noises about reducing, if not entirely eliminating their subsidies, seriously threatening the public family planning program.

Where to get the money? Representative Lagman-Luistro would target the automatic allocation for debt service, saying it's about time the power of Congress to allocate government funds is fully restored. An act repealing the automatic appropriation for debt service was passed by the House in the 11th Congress, she said, but it subsequently "slept" in the Senate.

By way of closing, let me quote Miranda's definition of leadership. Leadership, he said, is "finding yourself a parade and placing yourself ahead of it." Over the last decade and maybe longer, he noted, there has been a "quiet parade" on the issue of popular support for reproductive health and family planning. So far, it has yet to find a loud enough band to trumpet its presence, and enough leaders who will place themselves at the head of it. Maybe the time has come.

Treasures of the San Agustin Museum

LOOKING BACK



Ambeth R. Ocampo

IF it were not for the heat, stuffiness and the undiscounted entrance fees, I would visit the San Agustin Museum in Intramuros more often. Although I have seen the exhibits in this historic old church countless times, I keep returning because I find something new on each visit. Recently, I found myself walking aimlessly in the dark and quiet halls hoping to see a historical ghost. When that was not forthcoming I amused myself by looking for an intricately carved lid of a small chest or *bargueño* kept in the old sacristy.

This depicts soldiers doing all sorts of everyday chores. Aside from gaining an idea into military life in the 18th century or earlier, this *bargueño* lid is memorable because in one overlooked corner are two soldiers seemingly at play—they are both smiling. Closer inspection reveals something I cannot adequately describe. This interesting piece of carving was missing on my visit and I presume it is in storage, or undergoing conservation. Surely, the MTRCB has not given this an R-18 or X rating.

The search for my favorite *bargueño* lid ended with a chest depicting Adam and Eve by the Tree of Life being tempted by the serpent. While trying to identify the tree and fruit I suddenly developed a craving for apples. Finding none, I distracted myself with reflections on Greek and Roman mythology. Their Gods acted in very human ways and I remembered Paris having to give one apple to three competing goddesses. By choosing only one goddess, Paris irritated the other two. Is the Apple of Paris the source for the poisoned apple that put Snow White to sleep? Is the Apple of Paris the same forbidden fruit that got Adam and Eve thrown out of the Garden of Eden?

The Bible does not name or describe the forbidden fruit. Our only clue is that as soon as Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, they realized they were naked and clothed themselves with fig leaves. Is the fig the forbidden fruit? One tradition insists this was a mango—a luscious, yellow, Philippine mango. Yet, Tina Cuyugan's landmark collection of erotica by Filipina writers, "Forbidden Fruit," has a sliced papaya. Why do Filipino Catholics imagine this fruit to be imported, shiny, red, with a brand name "delicious"? We do not grow apples in the Philippines but our folklore also has its share of forbidden fruit. The best *lanzones* are from Laguna where legend says were formerly poisonous until they were made sweet and edible by the pinch of a virgin who can either be Maria the Virgin Mary or the *encantada*, Mariang Makiling.

Symbolism enriches the way we see, read and understand works of art. Old paintings were made in the days where few people read and books were scarce. The walls of San Agustin are filled with pictures that all tell a story or express some moral lesson. These used to be easily understood in the past, but to us, centuries later, much is lost if we do not know our mythology, Bible stories and—to use a difficult word—our iconography.

Walking through San Agustin I busied myself by trying to identify the saints based on what they wear or hold. Religious art in San Agustin should speak to viewers over the centuries but there is a communication gap with the Gen X and the digital world. Symbols in the artwork once universally understood are alien to us. At least we can appreciate religious art for the skill of the artist or the six-figure price tag attached to these but all our ways of seeing are not complete unless we know the stories behind the symbols, the stories behind the pictures. Iconography is a visual shorthand that expresses these stories and sometimes even Catholic dogma in religious art.

As a collector of Philippine religious imagery or *santos* I often encounter unidentified pieces and have to deduce the identity of a saint from what he or she is wearing, or from what he or she is holding. It's very easy in some cases, for example, St. Lucy holds a plate with a pair of eyes. Erap and Ms Marcos afflicted with eye ailments should invoke St. Lucy rather than trying to get permission to get eye operations abroad. St. Lucy had a persistent suitor who complained that her beautiful eyes tormented him. She tore them out and sent them to him on a plate as a present.

Saint Agatha holds her breasts in a plate because one of the torments she endured before martyrdom was having her breasts cut off. Unfortunately, in most images, owing to the incompetence of the artist or a prudish sense of artistry, the breasts are not so accurately done. Thus, St. Agatha's breasts are mistaken for bells or loaves of bread. So St. Agatha is invoked not only by those with breast cancer but also by bakers and bell-makers.

Unfortunately, I have not spotted Saints Agatha, Lucy, Perpetua and Felicity in the cloisters of San Agustin. They don't even have St. Wilgefortis who prayed so hard that God would preserve her virginity, so on her wedding night she grew a beard. Naturally, she remained chaste all her life. At least San Agustin has other marvels like San Pedro Martir with a bolo on his head, or St. Michael nimbly dancing on the devil's back. Religious art is meant to be enjoyed and contemplated though at times I run very well, but in the wrong direction.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

A window of opportunity

OUTLOOK

Rigoberto Tiglao

WE could be in a crucial period of our history. Consider the following points.

Any country needs its leadership continually refreshed, and nobody really would want a single person in power for decades. Complacency and worse, corruption, seem to be inevitable diseases debilitating governments too long in power.

However, look at the modern histories of most of the Asian tigers and even of the industrial nations—Singapore under Lee Kuan Yew; South Korea under Park Chung-hee; Japan under the LDP shoguns; and even Malaysia under Mohamad Mahathir.

This isn't an argument for strongman states. Note the extended regimes of Queen Elizabeth and even Margaret Thatcher, and the eight-year presidencies of Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton. In many cases in which countries were able to build up their economic bases, or, as in the case of the United States, was able to maintain growth for unprecedented periods, there had been a single head of state. Or at least, in the case of Japan, a single party in power.

It's not difficult to see why. Changes in government are essentially destabilizing, even in democratic countries. Even if he shares the same ideology or world-view of his predecessor, each president brings with him or her a new set of government functionaries, who most often overhaul their departments, which means a period of adjustment and learning before the new administration really starts to move. A recent example here obviously is the transition from the Aquino to the Ramos administration.

Worse of course is when the succeeding president has a totally different world-view from the previous, as was the case of the disgraced President Estrada. In this case, despite the lip service that the economic policies of the previous administration aren't being drastically changed, they are practically shelved, or even slowly reversed.

In this globalized, hi-tech world, stability of regimes is even more crucial. If you were Intel now looking for another country to put your Pentium-assembly plant, you'd be a bit worried if you see that three years from now, there'd be another president with probably a totally different view of how to run a country.

But then one would argue that we did in fact have had a case in which we had the same president for more than a decade: Marcos. Yes, it was a disaster in its twilight years, 1981 to 1985, because of the mammoth corruption that caught up with the regime, and even in its earlier years, its costs to democracy and human lives were huge.

But take a look at the figures:

Government	Average Annual Real GDP Growth Rate (In Percent)
Marcos I (1972-1980)	5.8
Marcos II (1981-1985)	-1.1
Aquino (1986-1991)	2.9
Ramos (1992-1997)	3.8
Estrada (1998-2000)	2.0

There are many reasons of course for the nearly 6 percent growth from 1972 to 1980, unmatched by the shorter-lived, subsequent regimes. One reason though is that most often, a particular momentum of growth is built up by a single head of state. It's a cliché that business by nature needs stability. The best form of stability is the same head of state for an extended period of time.

Estrada's fall could be a tremendous boon for us—if President Macapagal can hack it. Our Constitution limits us to six-year presidencies. But People Power II has given Ms Macapagal three years of rule She may have been right when she said that she doesn't aspire to be a great Philippine President but just a good President. If she becomes just a good President in the next three years, she'll be a shoo-in for another six-year term in the 2004 elections.

That would mean a nine-year presidency—which could mean our first extended period of stability in two decades. It's a unique window of opportunity for the nation that's unlikely to happen again. It would be a terrible tragedy for us if President Macapagal fails to exploit this opportunity.

Botched rescue attempt

I was surprised why a press statement of the New People's Army making allegations regarding the circumstances of Police Chie Insp. Abelardo Martin's death had not been reported by most papers.

I think the allegations should be answered by the Armed Forces of the Philippines not only to set the record straight but since it raises the bigger issue of whether the military had made an initiative—to undertake a rescue operation—which was at cross-purposes to the civilian leadership's policy to negotiate for the release of the NPA's two military captives. The main parts of the NPA's statement reads as follows:

"As has been mentioned by the Melito Glor Command of the NPA the NPA custodial force had been based in the area and was preparing for Martin's release for two months. The masses often saw Martin exercising near the NPA base. In anticipating his release, Martin had even requested the local masses to make him some rattan handicraft that he would hand over as *pasalubong* to his family.

"When the military found out about Martin's presence in the area the 4th Intelligence Security Unit (ISU) conducted intensive intelligence operations in the area for more than a month.

"It is not true that merely 10 soldiers led by Lt. Warren Lee Dagupon were involved in the operation. A few days before the actual operation was launched, two battalions of Army Special Forces under the 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion and 1st IB PA had already been deployed to secure the area.

"After gathering enough information and pinpointing their target, a small team of Scout Rangers was used to conduct a commando-type rescue operation.

"Before Inspector Martin's death was confirmed, General Lachica boasted in the early morning of March 8 that they had recovered Martin through a rescue operation. It was only when news broke out of Inspector Martin's death that the military claimed that a 'chance encounter had occurred to cover up the bungled rescue operation.

"There is no truth either to Lieutenant Dagupon's claim that his team clashed with up to 60 Red fighters. The NPA custodial force was composed of only five NPA guerrillas."

* * *

Comments: rtiglao@inq7.net

THEY SAID

Keeping things short

"In deference to the new President, all my remarks will be short."

—Sen. Juan Flavier told the crowd during the administration party's presentation of candidates

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Rituals

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

A FRIEND told me the other day of his great dismay over a picture that appeared in the front page of the INQUIRER. That picture showed the folk of Tondo greeting Erap like a long lost son. It was a huge crowd that turned out for him—the caption said he was campaigning for his (real) wife, Loi—and the people in front were all reaching out to where he stood on the stage, trying to touch him. The caption also said President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had been there earlier, and she was met by boos. Clearly, to go at least by the folk of Tondo, Erap continued to wield a clout with the poor. If he was disgraced at all, they did not know about it.

I did not bother to repeat what I've always said about the relative popularity of Erap versus Gloria. Nor did I repeat what I've always said about the need for those purporting to lead the masses out of the wilderness to first understand them. I just said that that spectacle wasn't altogether surprising in light of a curious finding by one of the surveys (I don't recall now if it was the Social Weather Stations or Pulse Asia) shortly before Erap was ousted by People Power II. Which was that while the overwhelming majority of Filipinos—more than 80 percent, I think—believed Erap was guilty of the charges against him, only 49 percent thought he should be removed from office.

I've always thought—and said then in passing—that that was revealing of the complexities, or perversities, of Philippine culture. For strangely, there seemed no visible connection between guilt and punishment, between crookedness and a capability to govern. Part of the explanation for it I would see later in interviews of the poor on TV. A vendor would say she was sure Erap did not keep the money to himself but spent it on people like them. A couple of others would say the same thing: Erap's heart went out to them. The implication of all this was that crookedness, far from indicating unfitness for public office, indeed for the highest office of the land, sometimes indicated an extraordinary talent to govern. Erap was stealing from the rich to give to the poor. He was the Robin Hood of lore. He was the government they had always hoped for.

But that did not explain everything. For not everybody thought that way. Most others were simply cynical and said Philippine leaders were all the same. Previous presidents stole just as badly, if not worse. They just didn't get caught. Erap might be no better, but he was no worse. He was at least better in one respect: He was "one of them." He was *"ka-tropa."*

My friend remained greatly distressed and wondered what it was in our culture that made it so easy for us to forgive and forget even oppression of epic scale. It was perverse. Will evil never get punished in this country? It seemed to reflect badly on the Catholic Church, he said, which was supposed to teach us morals, which was supposed to teach us the difference between right and wrong, which was supposed to teach us about honesty and decency.

Well, I've always thought that the Church's own capacity to teach these things was greatly subverted by what it did. The Church's capacity to dissuade theft was subverted by its vast landholdings—how many of them the friars extracted from deathbed, by threatening the dying with hellfire if they did not transfer their earthly possessions to them, only they know. The Church's capacity to dissuade materialistic pursuits was subverted by its catering to the rich on one hand (the Church of Sin) and humoring the poor on the other (the Church of Mike Velarde), both of which made for a mighty accumulation of wealth and power. Those who can't do, preach, as they say. The Catholic Church seems to have made a career out of it.

But more than that, I wondered aloud, after reflecting on what my friend had just said, if the problem wasn't ingrained in the kind of religion we practiced. A religion characterized more by public displays of virtue rather than privately rejoicing in it, by conspicuous do-gooding rather than just being honest and decent in daily life, by relying on the ritualistic expiation of sin rather than conscientiously avoiding it. We call it Christianity, but it is a curious kind of Christianity. I don't know whether our original pre-Hispanic culture corrupted it, or whether it corrupted our original pre-Hispanic culture. But there it is, and it is messing up our concept of crime and punishment.

Look at the way ritual governs our lives. We go to confession and receive communion, and instantly we find ourselves relieved of a lifetime of iniquity. Of course the caveat there is that we must show repentance and vow not to commit the same sins again. But five "Our Fathers," 10 "Hail Marys" and 20 "Glory Bes" are a small price to pay for contrition. And as to being sincere in making your vows, I remember a friend of mine who once told me that each time he told a girl—there were rather too many of them—"You're the only one for me," he really meant it at that time. Was it his fault he got sidetracked again and again?

We go to Mass and receive the sacraments, and instantly we radiate with grace as dazzlingly as do our Sunday clothes. We give to charity, preferably the ones the Church identifies as God's favorites, and instantly we earn insurance in heaven, also called indulgences, which we collect when we die as surely as our relatives do our insurance on earth. We flail at our backs with pieces of broken glass and even nail ourselves on the cross—which we should see in Pampanga and Tarlac in the next couple of weeks; those rituals actually made it to Ripley's "Believe it Or Not"—and instantly we atone for sticking a knife in another person's ribs while in the throes of drunkenness.

Morality is not something to cultivate, like a flower, it is something to frame, like a diploma. Sincerity is not something to feel, like love, it is something to act out, like a movie. Is it a wonder Erap eats fish with his hands in the hovel of a slum dweller, and everybody thinks he is *masa*? Is it a wonder we throng in Edsa, or Mendiola, to end a tyranny and think it is over when the tyrant has fled?

The tyranny is in our hearts. That is not easily brought down by sporadic and ritualistic displays of virtue, or heroism.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

Shocked and saddened by Tan's conviction

IT was with shock and sadness that we learned of the conviction by the Sandiganbayan of former Ambassador and Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Bienvenido Tan Jr. for graft and corruption as reported by your newspaper on March 2, 2001.

We have worked with Tan in various development projects, both at the Ayala Foundation and in our personal affiliations with various groups and organizations. In all of these, he has always exhibited the utmost dedication and commitment to the programs, going out of his way to give of his personal time to study the projects and talk to the communities, and recommending various ways that the projects may become more effective. He has, we feel, exemplified the best characteristics of civil society partnerships and commitment to social development in the Philippines.

Beyond this, however, he has conducted himself consistently with the utmost integrity and a very high sense of moral values. We know that this behavior has impressed and influenced many people he has worked with in different settings both within the country and in the international community.

We know that Tan, who has spent many years in the service of the country, whether in his personal capacity or in government, has always fought for what is fair and just and has always had the country's interest foremost in his mind.—**JAIME ZOBEL DE AYALA, chair; FERNANDO ZOBEL DE AYALA, co-vice chair; JAIME AUGUSTO ZOBEL DE AYALA II, co-vice chair; MARIA AURORA TOLENTINO, executive director, Ayala Foundation Inc., Ayala Museum, Makati Avenue, Makati City**

School has maintained old tuition rates

THIS refers to an article published on Feb. 17 titled, "Rising tuition aggravates C. Luzon families' poverty," written by Russell Arador. The article which was based on the study "Capacity of state colleges and universities (SCU) students to cope with tuition fee hikes," conducted by Dr. Lolita Sicat of the Tarlac State University (TSU) included the Don Honorio Ventura College of Arts and Trades (DHVCAT) among the six government-owned colleges and universities in Central Luzon.

The article said that "except for the CLSU, which continued to charge old rates of P500 to P1,000 a semester, school fees in the other five SCUs had increased by as much as 300 percent." It further stated that "for school year 2000-2001, semestral fees cost P3,000-P3,500 at the TSU; P1,000-P2,000 at the TCA, DHVCAT and NEUST; and P1,000-P1,500 at the PAC."

For the information of all concerned, especially the people of Pampanga, the DHVCAT increased its semestral fees for school year 2000-2001 by 100 percent only or an equivalent cost of P635-P840 per semester.

While the other SCUs in Central Luzon gradually increased their semestral fees since three years ago, the DHVCAT maintained its old rates because the majority of its students come from poor families who have been victims of lahar that devastated the province of Pampanga in 1991 to 1995.—**JAIME L. SIBUG, accounting department, Don Honorio Ventura College of Arts and Trades, Bacolor, Pampanga**

THE FIGURES cited in my report were based on the study of Dr. Lolita Sicat titled, "Capacity of state colleges and universities (SCU) students to cope with tuition hikes." Dr. Sicat is a professor of statistics at the Tarlac State University Graduate School.—**Russell Arador**

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LETTERS

Producers set schedule for film showing

WE wish to clarify the issue raised in the column of Leah Salterio last March 7, with the head, "Uncut version of 'Live Show' to be shown starting today," which said that the movie "was scheduled for a Valentine's Day play date, but the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) pointed out some objectionable scenes in the film, pending its classification."

In the same column, Salterio also reported that "Regal Films got the green light from the censors to exhibit the film without cut."

"Live Show" was approved by the board under Chair Armida Siguion-Reyna on May 12, 2000. Once the MTRCB issues a permit to exhibit the film, it absolutely has no power to control the scheduling of the film's public exhibition, since this is entirely the prerogative of the producer.

We would appreciate it if Salterio would first verify her information on matters concerning the board with our office, in the interest of the public that your publication and the board are both committed to serve.—**NICANOR G. TIONGSON, chair, Movie and Television Review and Classification Board, Unit 3201, 33rd Floor, Atlanta Centre, 31 Annapolis St., Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila**

Stop ascribing military ranks to PNP

EVEN with the passage of the Philippine National Police Law and the designation of police ranks for PNP officers, the media still persist in using military ranks for police officers. The continued usage of military ranks may not only be illegal but also gives a psychological advantage to the Philippine Military Academy graduates. No wonder that Mistahs get the plum posts! Interior Secretary Joey Lina should put a stop to this practice to emphasize the civilian character of the police force.—**BENJIE SUBIDO, bensubido@isuzuphil.com**

Qualities sought in a DENR chief

THE HARIBON Foundation would like to announce that it has not endorsed any individual for the position of environment secretary, contrary to an INQUIRER report last Feb. 24. We have clearly stated this position to the NGOs for Integrated Protected Areas Inc. (Nipa) and the Haribon Foundation has not authorized Nipa to speak for the organization on such an important issue. It is unfortunate that this position was not articulated in the news item.

We have instead supported a move by the Bantay-DENR to provide President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo a set of criteria for the selection of the secretary. The Bantay-DENR is a coalition of 58 developmental non-government and people's organizations which aims to provide a venue to air issues and concerns affecting the environment and natural resources. The Bantay-DENR wants a candidate with the following qualifications:

- Known integrity and credibility in the public service.
- A track record for supporting community-based natural resources management, ancestral domains recognition and protection, local and community-based development, human rights, gender fairness and environmental protection.
- Clear knowledge of who the Department of Environment and Natural Resources constituents are: the local people and not the profit-oriented industries.
- Should not subscribe to the pro-industry culture within the DENR masked under the much-abused language of sustainable development.
- Should have no connection with environmentally destructive business and activities that generate opportunities out of the environmental sector like environmental consulting firms.
- Enjoys public confidence.

In addition, we call on President Macapagal to exercise new politics in the selection of the secretary and not to sacrifice our forests and biodiversity. We ask the President to consider a candidate who has an extensive management experience and who will support a total commercial log ban as part of the administration's environmental agenda.

The Haribon Foundation believes that civil society, through the various NGOs and POs, plays an important role in natural resource conservation and potential candidates should learn to capitalize on their strengths. We expect a secretary who will listen and work with NGOs and POs, including those critical of the department. In the past, there have been efforts, such as the NGO desk at the DENR, aimed at building meaningful and relevant partnerships with civil society organizations. This was, however, strained by the anti-NGO/PO position of the previous secretary.

As there are numerous environmental problems that the country now faces, we look forward to having a secretary who will welcome meaningful participation from NGOs and POs.

Finally, we ask those seeking the DENR post to favor conservation above all considerations in order to provide a balance to the development bias of the other departments in government.

While the search for environment secretary seems highly contested and controversial, the Haribon Foundation ultimately wishes to work with a secretary toward a progressive, pro-people and conservation-oriented DENR that is open to critical collaboration with NGOs and POs.—**HECTOR D. SOLIMAN, president, Haribon Foundation for the Conservation of Natural Resources, 9 Malingap cor. Malumanay Streets, Teachers Village, Diliman, Quezon City**

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World puts up barriers to Europe livestock, meat, dairy products

PARIS—Countries around the world were yesterday imposing embargos on European livestock, meat and dairy products in a bid to stop foot-and-mouth spreading further after it crossed from Britain to France.

Australia, Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, New Zealand and the United States were among the first to react to news this week that the outbreak, first recorded in Britain three weeks ago, had finally spread to continental Europe.

Hitting out at the United States and Canada for snap bans on EU livestock and raw meat products, European Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner David Byrne said Wednesday the commission was "disappointed" by the actions.

"The commission is deeply disappointed that the very firm and decisive action taken to tackle the current outbreak has not received the recognition it deserves," Byrne told the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

"Third countries have responded . . . with restrictions, which are both excessive and unnecessary," he said, adding the EU would seek recourse at the World Trade Organization to have the bans lifted.

Byrne said he had spoken to US Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman and "I was reassured . . . that these measures will be reviewed urgently."

Earlier, Veneman described the US ban on meat and livestock imports from Europe as appropriate, but said there was no reason for US consumers to "panic" about the spread of foot-and-mouth disease.

Late on Wednesday, the total number of confirmed foot-and-mouth cases in Britain rose to 231. There is still only one confirmed case in continental Europe, in northwestern France.

An EU spokesperson earlier said import bans should only be implemented regionally, implying that only certain areas of the European Union—and not the entire 15-nation bloc—should be targeted. *AFP*

US Department of Agriculture officer Alex Belano cleans a pair of shoes with a bleach solution at Dulles International Airport in Chantilly, Virginia, March 14, in a demonstration to the media how to prevent the spread of foot-and-mouth disease. AP

Riady denies $1-M offer to Clinton

WASHINGTON—The Indonesian billionaire who has agreed to plead guilty to making illegal donations to Bill Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign denied having a conversation with the candidate about raising $1 million for the race, court records show.

James Riady "told Clinton that he would be supportive" of Clinton's campaign, meaning that he would provide financial support, but never mentioned $1 million during a conversation the two had in Clinton's limousine after a campaign event August 1992, according to a summary of information Riady has provided to federal prosecutors as part of a plea agreement.

"Riady did not suggest a one million dollar figure to Clinton at any time," said the summary, contained in papers filed Monday by federal prosecutors in US District Court in Los Angeles, where he is to be sentenced this coming Monday.

The summary, Riady's first account of his fund-raising activities to be made public, was released Wednesday by the Justice Department.

Riady has agreed to pay a record $8.6-million criminal fine and plead guilty to using corporate funds from his foreign Lippo Group to reimburse contributors Clinton's presidential campaign, the Justice Department said on Jan. 11, nine days before Clinton left office.

Foreign campaign contributions are illegal under US law.

The 1992 limousine ride was the focus of intense scrutiny by congressional investigators looking into campaign fundraising during Clinton's 1992 and 1996 campaigns. *AP*

Euthanasia bill introduced in South Australia

ADELAIDE, Australia—Independent lawmakers yesterday introduced a voluntary euthanasia bill into South Australia's state parliament, saying it featured tight restrictions designed to prevent it being abused.

Independent lawmaker Bob Such said under the bill two doctors and two witnesses would have to be present when a patient signed a form consenting to die.

The state's Parliament rejected a similar bill two years ago.

Such said the current bill had tighter safeguards than its predecessor and the fact that a state election was due within a year would also work in its favor.

"Seventy five to 80 percent of the public support it (euthanasia), the fact that it's close to an election will put pressure on MPs (members of parliament)" to pass the bill, he said.

There was no immediate indication of the level of support the bill had in the legislature.

Such said the state would keep a register of all euthanasia deaths and a monitoring committee, including the state's Council of Churches, would be formed to review the way the law was being carried out.

Such said the bill also encouraged doctors to give patients considering euthanasia counseling on other care options, a provision he said could be made mandatory.

Voluntary euthanasia was made legal in Australia's Northern Territory state for a brief period in 1996. Dr. Phillip Nitschke, made international headlines when he performed euthanasia on four terminally ill patients shortly after its introduction. *AP*

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Provincial Entries : 10 days before schedule draw date.
Metro Manila Entries : 1 week before schedule draw date.
13. Winners will be notified through registered mail and will be published in national papers.
14. Winners will be required to present the registered mail and a valid I.D. (passport, driver's license, birth certificate) when claiming their prize. Major prize winners can claim their prizes at Columbia Global Photo Sales Corp., located at 129-135 G. Roxas St., SFDM, Q.C. Consolation prize winners can claim their prize at the nearest store specified in the telegram.
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3014 Series of 2000

INDIA CORRUPTION

Vajpayee cancels address to parliament about scam

NEW DELHI—India's prime minister canceled plans to address Parliament about the scandal breaking around him on Thursday after raucous members of the opposition thumped desks and ran into the well of both houses.

A spokesperson said it was unlikely that Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee would address Parliament on Thursday.

"The chances are very bleak, since both houses have been adjourned" until Friday, Dheeraj Singh said.

Vajpayee had no plans to address the nation on radio or television about the corruption scandal, Singh said.

The president of Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party, Bangaru Laxman, resigned Tuesday night after an Internet media company, Tehelka.com, released videotapes of him accepting $2,175. But the journalists told Laxman on the tape that the money was for a New Year's party, and did not mention a defense deal.

The website showed four hours of video Tuesday to support its allegation that top Army officers and senior officials of at least two political parties in the governing coalition accepted money from its undercover reporters.

Since he came to power in March 1998, Vajpayee's government had not previously been accused of corruption, an image his allies were using to fight regional elections against entrenched local politicians.

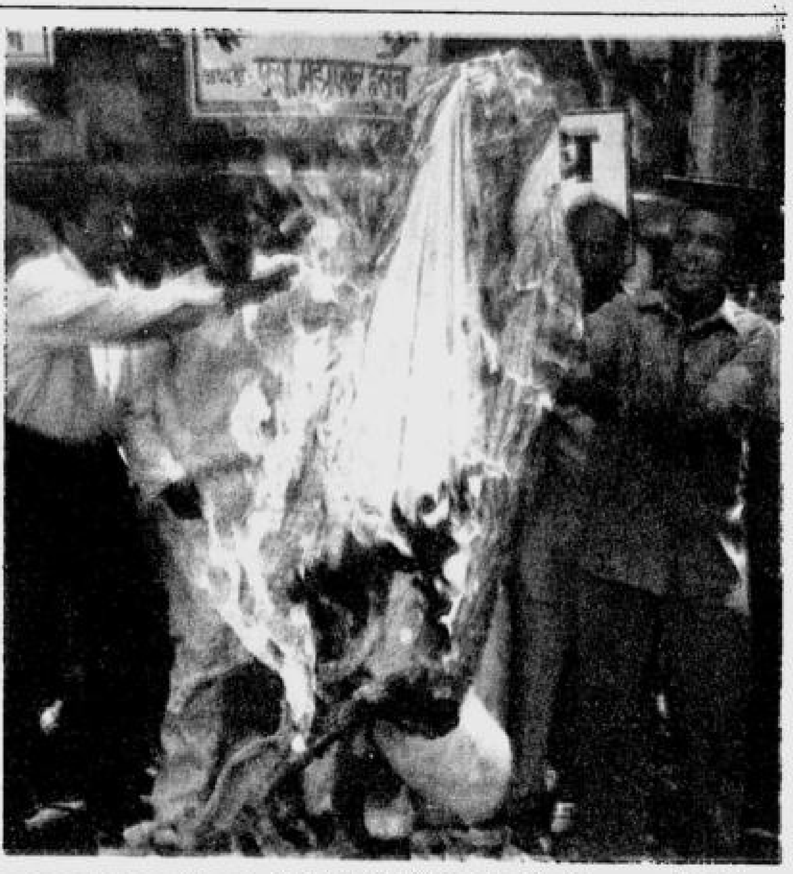
Accepting money to arrange defense contracts is illegal in India and carries a sentence of up to seven years upon conviction.

Tehelka.com said it copied the name of a London security services firm, printed letterhead and sent reporters out pretending to be defense contractors pushing a $870,000 deal for hand-held thermal cameras and other equipment.

But at least two organizations denied reports that its leaders accepted bribes from Tehelka.com.

The Rashtriya Sevak Sangh, parent organization of Vajpayee's party, denied that R.K. Gupta, filmed accepting a bribe by the journalists, was one of its trustees, as the website claimed.

"Gupta, though known to some of our workers in Delhi, has no position in the RSS," the group said in a statement faxed to news organizations Thursday. *AP*



MEMBERS of the opposition Congress Party burn the effigy of India Defense Minister George Fernandes during a demonstration in Bombay, March 14, following the release of a news website's documentary which implicated senior officials in an alleged arms bribery. REUTERS

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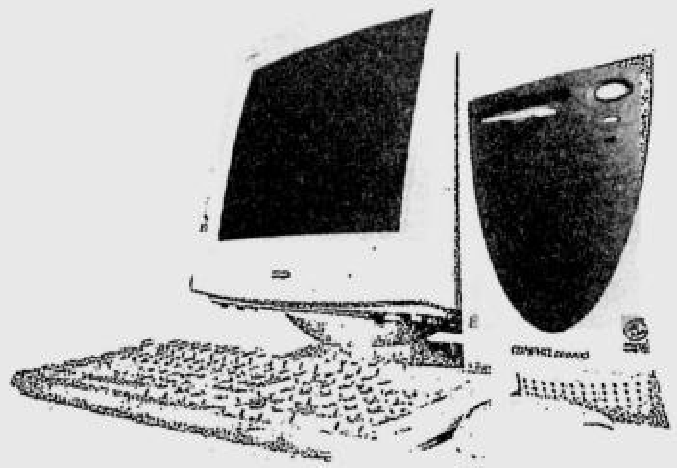

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Tribal chief sworn in as Fiji leader

SUVA—At a somber ceremony yesterday at a sprawling colonial mansion an elderly, ailing tribal chief was sworn in as Fiji's president in the latest move aimed at guiding the ethnically divided nation back to democracy.

Earlier, President Ratu Josefa Iloilo's nephew, Ratu Tevita Momoedonu, resigned as prime minister less than 24 hours after his uncle had sworn him in, saying he was making way for democratic elections expected to be held in August, the first since a nationalist coup in May.

Dressed in a traditional "sulu" skirt and black jacket, Iloilo was sworn in by the Pacific nation's chief justice Sir Timoti Tuivaga as heavily armed special forces in civilian clothing patrolled the mansion's manicured lawns.

Once in office, Iloilo confirmed he was appointing Laisenia Qarase, who resigned as interim prime minister on Wednesday to make way for Momoedonu, as leader of a caretaker government to prepare for fresh elections.

Qarase said he would name his new Cabinet Friday.

Iloilo delivered a strong Fijian nationalist message in a speech after his swearing-in, warning his indigenous Fijian countrymen they should "be concentrating now as never before on attaining political unity."

Five separate Fijian parties contested the 1999 election, losing to a coalition of parties led by the Indian-dominated Fiji Labor Party, which was ousted a year later by Fijian nationalist gunmen.

The complex political maneuvering in the capital, Suva, is designed to help Fiji return to democracy for the first time since the May 19 coup.

"I hope to ease the tensions and set the country on a clear course" to democratic government, Iloilo said.

"An early election will give us a new start." *AP*

More Madurese flee riot-torn Borneo island

JAKARTA—A further 160 Madurese have fled Indonesian Borneo for Java after weeks of bloody ethnic unrest that has left some 500 people dead and created more than 50,000 refugees, a local official yesterday said.

"Some 160 Madurese refugees left on board a Pelni (state shipping company) boat from Kuala Pembuang yesterday," said district official Zulharman from the town of Sampit. "The boat is heading for East Java."

He said the latest batch of Madurese to leave were from Sampit, Samuda and the areas between Samuda and Kuala Pembuang.

"A lot were Madurese who had hid in the forests and had been evacuated by police and local residents," Zulharman said. "Some were brought to the police posts by companies operating in the area."

Violence between indigenous Dayak tribesmen and the Madurese migrant community erupted in Sampit on Feb. 18.

Some 500 people have been killed since, most of them Madurese. Many of the victims were decapitated or mutilated. More than 50,000 Madurese have fled or been evacuated from the province.

Zulharman said vacant houses formerly owned by Madurese continued to be burned in Sampit.

"There were some four or five burning houses late last (Wednesday) night," he said, but added that daily life had more or less returned to normal with markets and businesses open.

The chief medical officer for Sampit, Qomaruddin Sukhami, said however "pyschological problems" were beginning to set in among Sampit's Dayak population.

"Those who took part in the attacks are exhibiting stress. They think they are being attacked by Madurese, even though most of them have left," Dr Sukhami said. *AFP*

Ugandans re-elect Museveni

KAMPALA—Ugandans have decided to give their leader Yoweri Museveni, who came to power after a victorious rebel war in 1986, a final five years in office, but rivals in a presidential race complained Wednesday that voting was rigged.

"He will not go!" chanted supporters of President Museveni crammed into dozens of honking collective taxis and squeezed onto mopeds, to the accompaniment of whistles and cheers.

In Monday's poll, Museveni, who took up arms in 1981 precisely because of allegations that the general election of 1980 was rigged against him, sailed through what had been described as the biggest challenge of his career, one posed by a prominent member of his own government.

In casting their ballots, the 69.3 percent of voters who the electoral commission announced Wednesday had voted for Museveni reaffirmed their support for the broad-based Movement system of governance he installed on coming to power, which prohibits political parties from functioning.

Museveni's main challenger Kizza Besigye took 27.8 percent, according to official results.

All of the incumbent's five rivals in the poll have complained of irregularities.

Besigye, who worked as Museveni's doctor during the bush war and then served in his government until late last year, has called for a rerun, saying he deemed the results null and void.

"This was a fraudulent election. We have rejected the outcome and intend to challenge it using all means at our disposal within a legal and political framework," Besigye told a news conference after results were announced. *AFP*

AN ETHNIC Albanian boy shouts slogans in support of the Kosovo Liberation Army in the town of Tetovo, some 50 km southeast of the capital Skopje. More than 3,000 ethnic Albanians attended the rally demanding more rights for Albanians living in Macedonia. REUTERS

NEW BALKANS WAR

Yugoslav forces return to Kosovo buffer zone

MIRATOVAC, Yugoslavia—In a key test for Balkans stability, Yugoslav troops marched into a tense buffer zone bordering Kosovo Wednesday to end an Albanian insurrection threatening to spark a new Balkans war.

With Nato helicopters buzzing overhead, motorcades of Yugoslav jeeps followed by hundreds of infantry set off at dawn along muddy roads into the thickly wooded hills where Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia meet.

It was the first time Yugoslav troops have been allowed into the area since the end of the Kosovo conflict two years ago.

Yugoslav Prime Minister Zoran Zizic told reporters late Wednesday that the deployment went smoothly.

"No incidents or provocations occurred," Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Neojsa Covic said. "All the procedures agreed with Nato and KFOR (Nato-led troops) were respected."

Zizic earlier hailed the deployment as "the first concrete step toward establishing confidence between Yugoslav state institutions and the international community."

"There can be no peace and stability in the Balkans without the participation of Yugoslav security forces," Zizic said, adding it was also the "first step in scrapping the zone," set up at the end of the Kosovo war in 1999.

But local Albanian leader Riza Halimi called the manuever "open pressure" on the Albanians in the region, Beta news agency reported.

"The world should understand that calming down tensions is directly linked with the full demilitarization of the region," Halimi said.

He said he was "very concerned at the enormous concentration of military forces" in the area. *AFP*

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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Signs of ethnic cleansing surface in new province

IPIL, Zamboanga Sibugay—Local authorities are looking into reports that most of the 28 killings of Moro residents in the then undivided Zamboanga del Sur province since 1999 were carried out either by the military or police intelligence units.

The victims since 1999 were reportedly involved in kidnapping for ransom, extortion, piracy or were suspected members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Abu Sayyaf.

Of the 28 killings, many of them were committed in this fast-growing town that is now the seat of government of the newly formed Zamboanga Sibugay province.

Sibugay was carved out of Zamboanga del Sur.

The Muslim-Christian Alliance of the Philippines reported that 28 Muslim residents in the then undivided Zamboanga del Sur were killed since 1999. The group has sought the help of the Commission on Human Rights to investigate the killings, noting that this was an offshoot of deposed President Joseph Estrada's "all-out war" against the MILF.

On Monday, Police Director Gen. Leandro Mendoza directed Chief Supt. Dominador Domingo, regional chief for Western Mindanao, to investigate the complaint.

The CHR in Western Mindanao based in Zamboanga City will also send a special fact-finding team to Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay provinces to conduct a parallel investigation.

Insp. Pettronelo Ochotorena, Ipil police chief, told the INQUIRER his investigators are looking into reports that most of the killings involving Muslim residents here were allegedly carried out either by agents of the police or military intelligence units.

The other angle that his investigators are pursuing is that the killings could be results of "rido" or vendetta among clans.

"In our investigation, we zeroed in on these two angles," Ochotorena said.

Of the 28 recorded killings since 1999, 11 of them took place here.

But Ochotorena said that while there are Moro victims, there were also non-Moro victims.

Ochotorena's record shows 14 non-Moro victims and that only three of the victims—Bankerohan trader Jose Omisol, security guard Federico Domingo and farmer Rogelio Cabigon—were not executed by the MILF.

Ochotorena cited the case of seven fishermen massacred in Tungawan in January this year; the massacre of four civilians in Barangay Magdaup here in 1999, which, he said, "were all carried out by the MILF."

Ochotorena said they "cannot establish" if the killings of Moro residents were perpetrated by so-called "Christian vigilante groups."

At the height of the "all-out war" last year, several "Christian vigilante groups" in Zamboanga del Sur appeared on national television, expressing their readiness to help the government fight the MILF.

Also last year, a suspected vigilante group abducted family members of Barahama Ali, the alleged local chieftain of the MILF based in Naga, Zamboanga del Sur.

Ali's Special Operation Group (SOG) was suspected to be behind the abduction of three public school teachers in Naga, two of them female. They were freed in exchange for the release of Ali's wife, his father and three other relatives.

Ochotorena also claimed that the Moro residents who were killed were linked to illegal activities or with the MILF or the Abu Sayyaf.

He admitted his investigators are facing difficulties in building the cases against the suspects because "no one wants to testify."

Hernan de la Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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PMA tormentors sued for murder

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—Murder charges against the four suspects in the fatal hazing of Cadet Fourth Class Edward Domingo of the Philippine Military Academy here were filed by the Baguio police before the city prosecutor's office on Wednesday.

Charged with murder were Cadets Third Class John Louie Ong, Willard Aperocho, Michael Perang and Omar Julius Labajo.

They are held at the PMA Stockade here pending the issuance of warrants for their arrest.

PMA officials have given the Baguio police full authority over the case. The charges were filed after the Baguio police completed taking the testimony of cadets who were with Domingo on that fateful night and had knowledge of the incident on Saturday night.

However, Maj. Gen. Manuel Carranza Jr., PMA superintendent, said he thinks the murder charges would not progress as there was no "intent to kill" on the part of the suspects.

"(I think) the murder charges will not progress because if you talk about murder, you have the intent to kill. In this case (the suspects) have no intent to kill," Carranza told reporters here on Wednesday.

During a Monday press conference, Carranza said Domingo's death was "unintentional" and was a result of a good-natured celebration that PMA senior cadets accord subordinate cadets who have successfully hurdled their academic subjects.

Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thundertorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

⛅ Metro Manila Hi 32° Lo 23°	⛅ Baguio Hi 25° Lo 15°	⛅ Tuguegarao Hi 31° Lo 22°	⛅ Laoag Hi 33° Lo 22°
⛅ Clark Zone Hi 32° Lo 22°	⛅ Tagaytay Hi 30° Lo 21°	⛅ Legazpi Hi 27° Lo 23°	⛅ Calapan Hi 30° Lo 22°
🌧 Bacolod Hi 26° Lo 23°	🌧 Roxas Hi 28° Lo 25°	🌧 Cebu Hi 29° Lo 25°	🌧 Tacloban Hi 29° Lo 25°
🌧 Gen. Santos Hi 27° Lo 22°	🌧 Zamboanga Hi 28° Lo 24°	🌧 Cagayan de Oro Hi 29° Lo 23°	🌧 Davao Hi 28° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research

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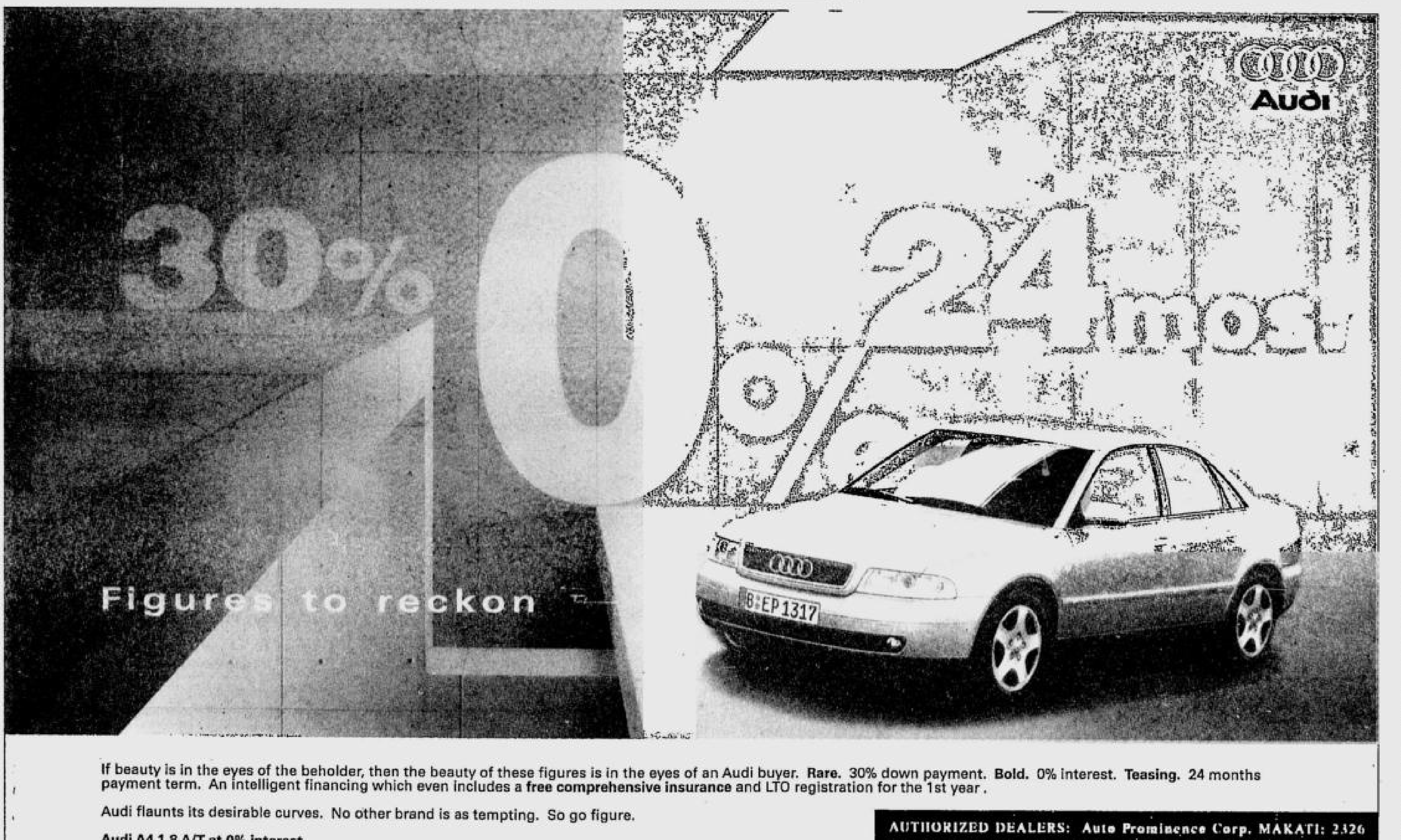

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Girl, 16, raped, killed in Cebu

BY ROGER PALLER
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Sixteen-year-old Naigil Florendo was sent to an errand by her mother at about 6:30 p.m. of Feb. 22.

It was the last time Naigil was seen alive. On March 13, her decomposing body was discovered in a grassy lot in Sitio Sapa-sapa, Barangay Mabolo.

The victim was stripped of her clothes. Her forehead was fractured and her mouth gagged. Police said Naigil might have been gang-raped by drug-crazed youths.

SPO1 Abel Diloy said the body was found a few feet away from a tree that is a favorite hang-out of so-called "rugby boys," a group of youths addicted to rugby. A bottle of rugby was also found near the body, he added.

Dr. Jesus Cerna, police medico legal officer said the victim died of strangulation.

He said he could not examine the presence of semen in the victim's sex organ because the body was already in an advanced state of decomposition.

Florendo, 16, was a graduating student of the Ramon Duterte Memorial National High School in an uptown barangay of Guadalupe.

She had planned to take up either a course on accounting or computer science after graduation.

NBI appeals for information on fugitive Lakas candidate

DIGOS CITY—Salvador Ranin, National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) director for Southern Mindanao, appealed for information that could lead to the arrest of a convicted swindler who is running in the May 14 elections.

Ranin said there is also a P20,000 reward awaiting any informant who could help authorities locate Pablo Villaber, a candidate for a House seat under the administration party Lakas-NUCD.

Villaber is the lone opponent of reelectionist Rep. Douglas Cagas of the Nationalist People's Coalition.

Villaber, convicted with finality by the Supreme Court in 1992 for estafa, is also barred from leaving the country after the justice department issued a hold departure order against him last week.

Ranin said efforts to track down Villaber last week failed as the fugitive was very elusive.

He said aside from his conviction in 1992, Villaber is also wanted for at least 88 criminal cases in different parts of the country.

"I have already coordinated with the regional aviation security office in Region 11 because it might be possible that Villaber would sneak in through the Davao airport. A similar coordination is also being finalized with other airport officials in Mindanao," Ranin said.

The NBI, he said, is also calling on other possible victims of Villaber to contact his office at (082) 2275070 or the NBI Manila for proper documentation of their charges.

If arrested, Villaber is to be booked at the National Penitentiary to serve a year in jail. He would be allowed to attend hearings on other charges he is facing, including fraud and falsification of documents. *Allan Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Cop chief who faces ax goes on leave

By Rianne Tecson
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Supt. Ronald Roderos took a 10-day leave starting yesterday, following reports that Mayor Alvin Garcia was planning to remove him as Cebu City police chief due to his failure to solve the spate of robberies in the city.

He told reporters that he decided to leave so the mayor could freely evaluate his nine-month performance as police director.

"I am gentleman enough to make this decision to give the mayor a free hand in evaluating my performance," he said.

Chief Supt. Tiburcio Fusilero, police director for Central Visayas, named Senior Supt. Alejandro Lapinid as acting police director.

Lapinid was Cebu City police chief from 1997 to 1999 but was relieved over allegations that he protected suspected drug lords.

Garcia admitted he planned to relieve Roderos and recommend Lapinid as acting city police chief because he was no longer satisfied with Roderos' performance.

"I hope he does not take this personally. I like him as a person. He is a conscientious officer but the results have not been very good. I am not yet satisfied," he said.

The recommendation was not sent to Camp Crame on Wednesday because Roderos asked for a 10-day leave of absence.

Vice Mayor Renato Osmeña, however, said he received reports that Roderos was to be relieved after Manila-based police officials poorly rated his performance.

But he said the replacement was delayed because a clearance from the Commission on Elections was needed before Roderos could be transferred to another assignment.

Election laws prohibit the transfer or relief of government employees during an election period.

Garcia, however, said he would still submit to the PNP a list of names of Roderos' possible replacement. *With a report from Kathy Navarro, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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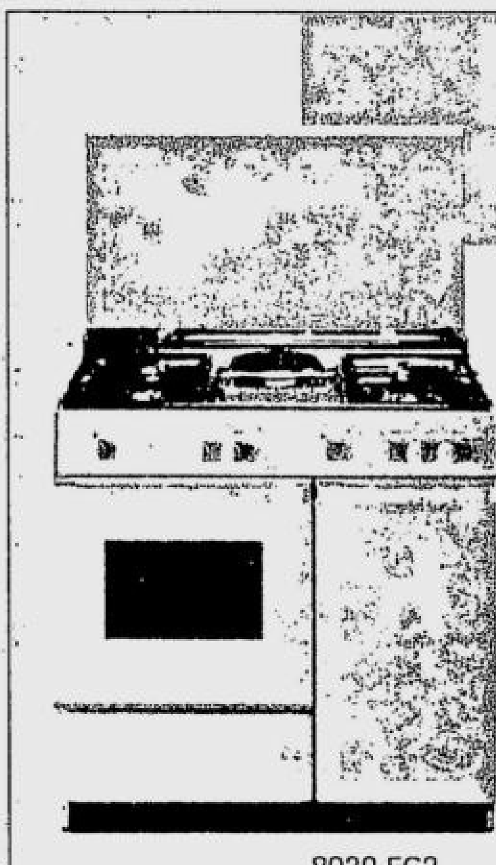
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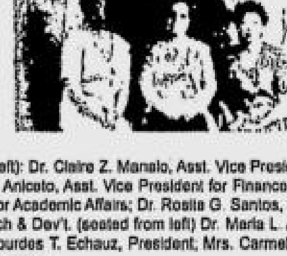
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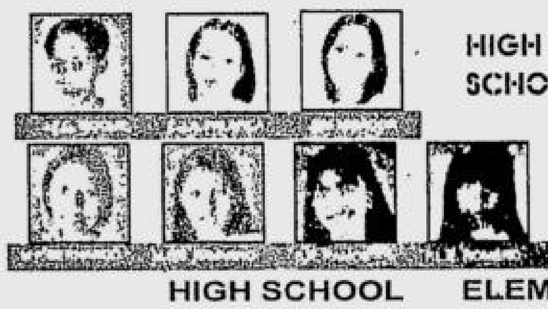

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The participating brands include: AIWA, Carrier, JVC, Kelvinator, La Germania, Pioneer, LG, Philips, Sanyo, Samsung, Sharp, Sony, and Whirlpool. Aside from that, there will be free items/giveaways awaiting customers on major purchases and on selected items. Indeed, these are all great stuff to enjoy life!

Promo starts March 15 and up until the 30th of April. Visit Abenson's 37 branches nearest you and don't fail to catch this sure-fire summer offering.

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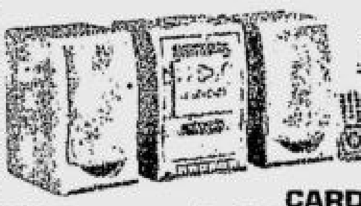

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CASH ₱6490

Mini Compo LCX-257
- 170W PMPO
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CARD ₱1082/mo (6 mos.)

VHS HV-FX999
- 4-Head Hi-Fi Stereo
- MTS Stereo
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Free UX RACK

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Gas Range T1720 WTRS
- 1 Turbo, 1 Large and 2 Gas Top Burners w/ electronic ignition.
- Rotisserie

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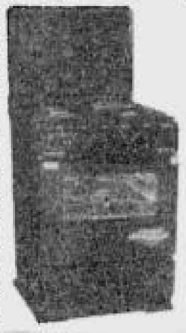

Gas Range 531WP
- 3 Gas Burners and 1 Electric

Free CROWN MUG

CASH ₱10395

CARD ₱1733/mo (6 mos.)

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- 2 Tuner PIP

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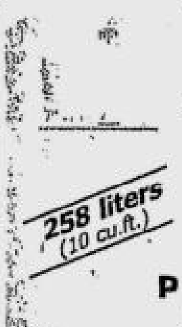
CARD ₱7150/mo (6 mos.)



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- Bar Handle
- (10 cu.ft.) 258L

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Free UMBRELLA

CASH ₱10700

Aircon KGNRM 070BB
- ¾ HP
- Super Cool Saver
- Energy Efficient
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CARD ₱1784/mo (6 mos.)

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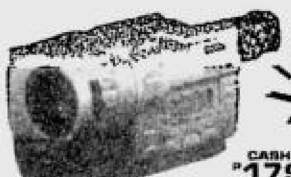

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Handycam CCD-TRV317
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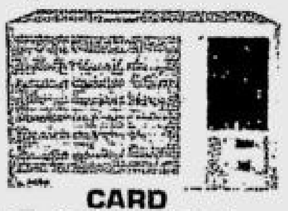

Aircon SA-T99P

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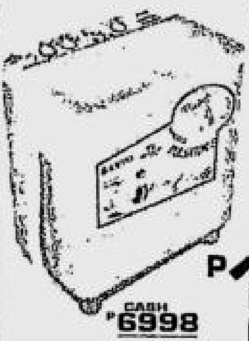
CARD ₱1330/mo (12 mos.)



Free 4-PC. TOWEL SET

Washing Machine SW-450DX
- 4.5kg Washing Capacity
- Automatic Reverse

CARD ₱1167/mo (6 mos.)

CASH ₱6998

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53.34cm (21")

CTV 21V-FL200S
- Variable Audio Output
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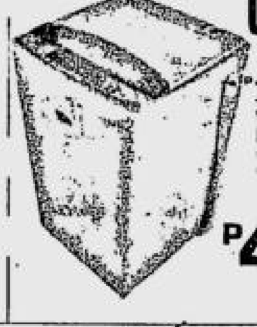
- Energy Save Function

CASH ₱16990

CARD ₱1416/mo (12 mos.)



CASH ₱14238

Free WM COVER

Washing Machine ES-701
- 7.0kg
- Dry Load Capacity Fully Automatic

CARD ₱4746/mo (3 mos.)

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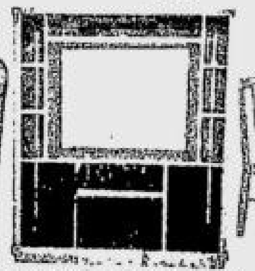
Living Room Set 3-1-1

CASH ₱8998

CARD ₱1500/mo (6 mos.)



Entertainment Center

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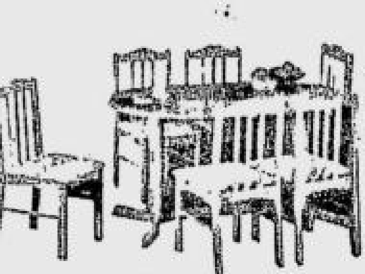


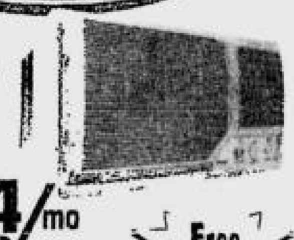
Dining Set
1 Oval Table & 6 Chairs

CASH ₱8998

CARD ₱1500/mo (6 mos.)

Carrier

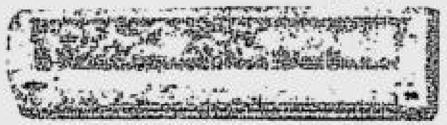
Room Aircon APMRM090BA
- 1 HP (0.746kwh)



CASH ₱14350

CARD ₱4784/mo (3 mos.)

Free UMBRELLA



Split Wall Aircon 53PGA009
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- Vertical Auto Air Swing
- Auto, Cool, Heat, Dry and Fan only selection

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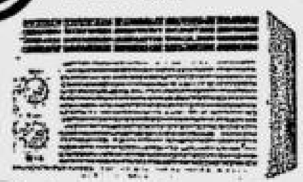
CARD ₱8634/mo (3 mos.)

LG

Aircon LWH0621 ACG
- 0.65 HP (5,900 kJ/hr)
- 9.6 EER
- Gold Fin

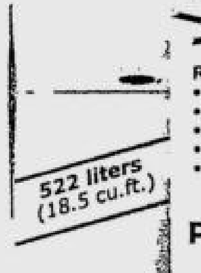


CASH ₱9995

CARD ₱1666/mo (6 mos.)

Free T-SHIRT

Free SOFT COOLER

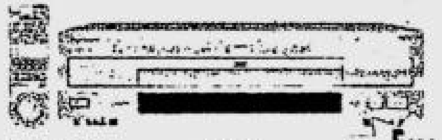


Ref. GR-632DVQ
- 522 liters/18.5 cu.ft.
- Fully Electronic Control System
- Door Cooling System
- Focused Cooling
- CFC Free

CASH ₱34500

CARD ₱5750/mo (6 mos.)

Pioneer



DVD-919
- 10-bit video D/A conversion (DVD/VCD)
- DVD/VCD dual system (PAL/NTSC)
- DVP (Digital Video Processing) system (LD)

CASH ₱23900

Free T-SHIRT

CARD ₱1992/mo (12 mos.)

Free MIC & SURROUND SPEAKERS

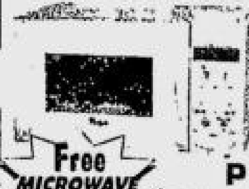
CASH ₱18490

VCD Compo VS-90SX
- 3500w PMPO
- 3-Disc VCD/CD Player
- 4-Speaker System

CARD ₱3082/mo (6 mos.)

Whirlpool

HOME APPLIANCES



Microwave Oven AVM-512
- 22 liters (0.8 cu.ft.)
- One Touch Auto-cook Function
- 800W Cooking Power
- Defrost Function

Free MICROWAVE COVER

CASH ₱5995

CARD ₱1999/mo (3 mos.)

Washing Machine 4LBR8255
- 10.5kg Large Capacity Fully Automatic
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- Magic Clean Lint Filter

CASH ₱21950

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Dr. Thomas Haggai (second from right), the Chairman and CEO of IGA, presents the prestigious Seal of Excellence to the branch head of Walter Mart Supermarket in Carmona, Cavite. Also in photo are the key officers of Walter Mart Supermarket.

Walter Mart Supermarket IGA

Walter Mart Supermarket 10th ANNIVERSARY

3-DAY SUMMER SALE

MARCH 16,17 & 18,2001

Item	BEFORE:	SALE:
MANGO/kg	P 55.00	P 35.00
SAYOTE/kg	P 12.00	P 8.00
SEEDLESS GRAPES/kg	P 230.00	P 175.00
CARROTS/kg	P 43.00	P 29.00
TOMATO/kg	P13.50	P 11.00
WHOLE CHICKEN/kg	P 78.00	P 69.00
PUREFOODS GOLDEN CRISPY CHICKEN 500 g	P 64.90	P 60.00
PUREFOODS CHICKEN HOTDOG 1 kg	P 104.50	P 96.75
MAGNOLIA CHICKEN POPCORN 225 g	P 45.10	P 41.50
B1T1 MALING HOTDOG 500g WITH FREE MALING LUNCHEON MEAT 170 g	P 133.00	P 126.50
CDO BURGER 500g	P 52.90	P 46.00
CDO HOTDOG 500 g	P 52.35	P 45.50
MARCA PINA SOY SAUCE 350 ml	P 8.50	P 8.10
MOTHER'S BEST BBQ MARINADE 150 ml	P 20.45	P 18.75
GARDENIA WHITE BREAD 600 g	P 28.50	P 26.25
LEMON SQUARE ASSORTED 6 in 1	P 24.25	P 19.55
LAURA'S RAISIN COOKIES 250 g WITH FREE BUTTER TOAST 150 g	P 31.95	P 29.20
ARGENTINA CORNED BEEF 175 g	P 23.85	P 21.85
LUDY'S PEANUT BUTTER GLASS 340 g	P41.40	P 37.50
KNICK KNACK CHOCO 70 g	P 9.00	P 8.25
DREAMS CHOKO FOIL PACK 50's	P 19.95	P 18.95
BLUE SKIES 20's	P 32.50	P 29.95
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VALLEY FRESH FRUIT COCKTAIL ROYALE 850 g/3's	P 125.85	P 100.00
MENTOS 50'S	P 22.40	P 19.95
ADAMS HALLS FRESH LIME 250's	P 88.00	P 78.95
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TERRA FRANCA RED/ WHITE WINE	P 512.50	P 278.00
BERSANO RED/WHITE WINE 750 ml	P 250.00	P 198.00
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VOLLEYBALL		P 125.00
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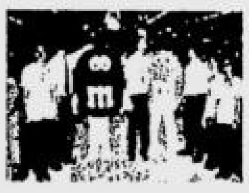

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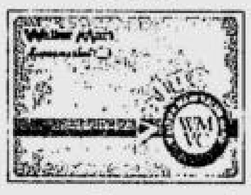

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Walter Mart Supermarket IGA
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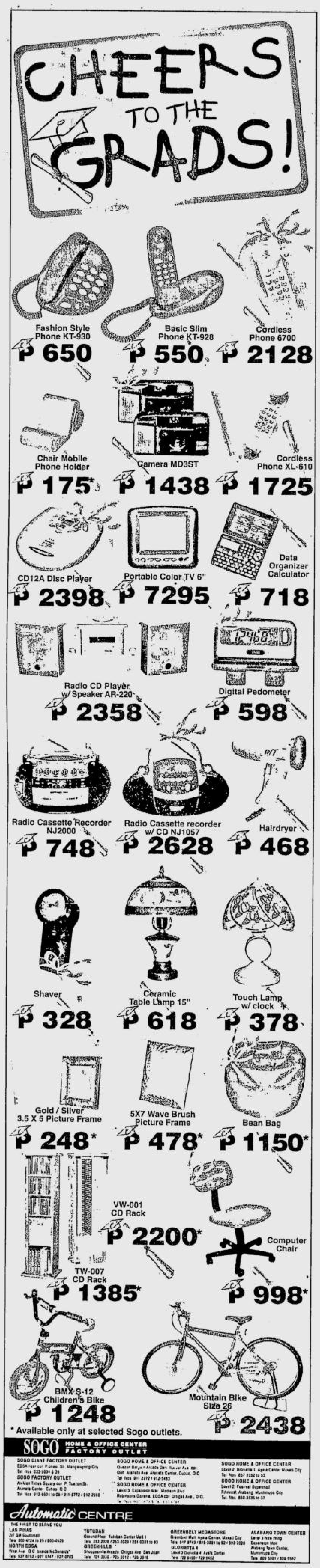

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Chinese-Filipinos in Baguio worry over spate of crimes

BAGUIO CITY—Chinese-Filipino residents here have petitioned city officials to tighten security in this city following a spate of violent crimes only last week, which culminated in the abduction and murder of two University of the Philippines students.

Authorities have recently been privy to reports of prior kidnap-for-ransom incidents in Baguio that went unreported until the murder of Giancarlo Leung and Tihani Tingal, whose bodies were recovered in Pampanga three days after they were reported missing here.

"Community leaders want to make sure this (the Leung killing) does not happen again. This is the first time a Chinese-Filipino was brutally victimized in Baguio where everything had always been peaceful. We are, of course, afraid and we have become very careful," Peter Ng, vice president of the Filipino Chinese Cantonese Association here, told the INQUIRER in Filipino.

Leung's family was affiliated with Ng's organization.

Mayor Mauricio Domogan advised Senior Supt. Villamor Bumanglag, Baguio police director, to immediately brief Chinese-Filipino associations of ethnic Cantonese, Fookien and Mandarin descent about the facts surrounding the abduction.

"(Domogan) was very worried about the kidnapping because it came at a time when crime was unusually high," Bumanglag admitted.

The Thursday abduction of Leung and Tingal came at the end of a week highlighted by the robbery of the Baguio Patriotic High School, where a female guard was stabbed dead and its Chinese principal beaten; and the death of a cadet at the Philippine Military Academy.

Ng said the spate of crimes affected the local Chinese Filipino community most.

"We even came up with a P100,000 reward for information on who could reveal to us the killer of our lady guard at the Chinese school," he said.

But local Chinese-Filipinos here have really been "silent victims" of crimes that may have gone unreported for years.

An agent of the National Bureau of Investigation here said at least three kidnappings, prior to the abduction of Leung and Tingal, have already reached their offices, "with more (cases) surfacing as the Leung case gains publicity."

He said in all of these abductions, ransom money was paid without their knowledge.

But Bumanglag said none of these abduction cases reached the local police. Ng also denied knowledge of any other abduction of Chinese-Filipinos except for an unreported incident three years ago, although he declined to elaborate.

Peculiarly, the Leung case involved a P1-million ransom demand that was a far cry from the P3 million and P5 million demanded from these previous abductions,' the NBI source said.

He said the recent disclosures on other kidnap-for-ransom cases here could help generate a pattern that would reveal a profile of the culprits "if this gang is Baguio-based or Northern Luzon-based."

Chinese-Filipinos here have started asking questions about the Leung abduction after being informed that the murders occurred right after the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) took over the case from the NBI.

The NBI was monitoring the ransom negotiations at the request of family members until Saturday, when the PAOCTF assumed control, said a businessman close to the Leung family.

"Will Gian still be alive if the PAOCTF did not interfere? Very likely because it was very smooth until PAOCTF came into the picture," he confided to the INQUIRER.

The NBI source said the kidnap gang had been negotiating through the 22-year-old Gian's cellular phone.

"The voice was very amateurish. They were even asking for P500 to buy a cell card . . . One time they demanded that the ransom be paid on a Saturday. Mrs. Leung kept insisting that the banks were closed on Saturdays . . . (The NBI) could hear from the background that the negotiator on the other line started asking for advice from his companions. It was very amateurish," he said in Filipino.

The same source said the ransom payment was about to push through when the PAOCTF suddenly stepped in upon the request of Leung's father.

He said it was about that time when the kidnap gang suddenly called up to chastise Mrs. Leung: "Why is the PAOCTF involved here?"

He said that was the end of the negotiations.

"I felt bad when (Leung and Tingal) were discovered dead. This shouldn't have happened," he said. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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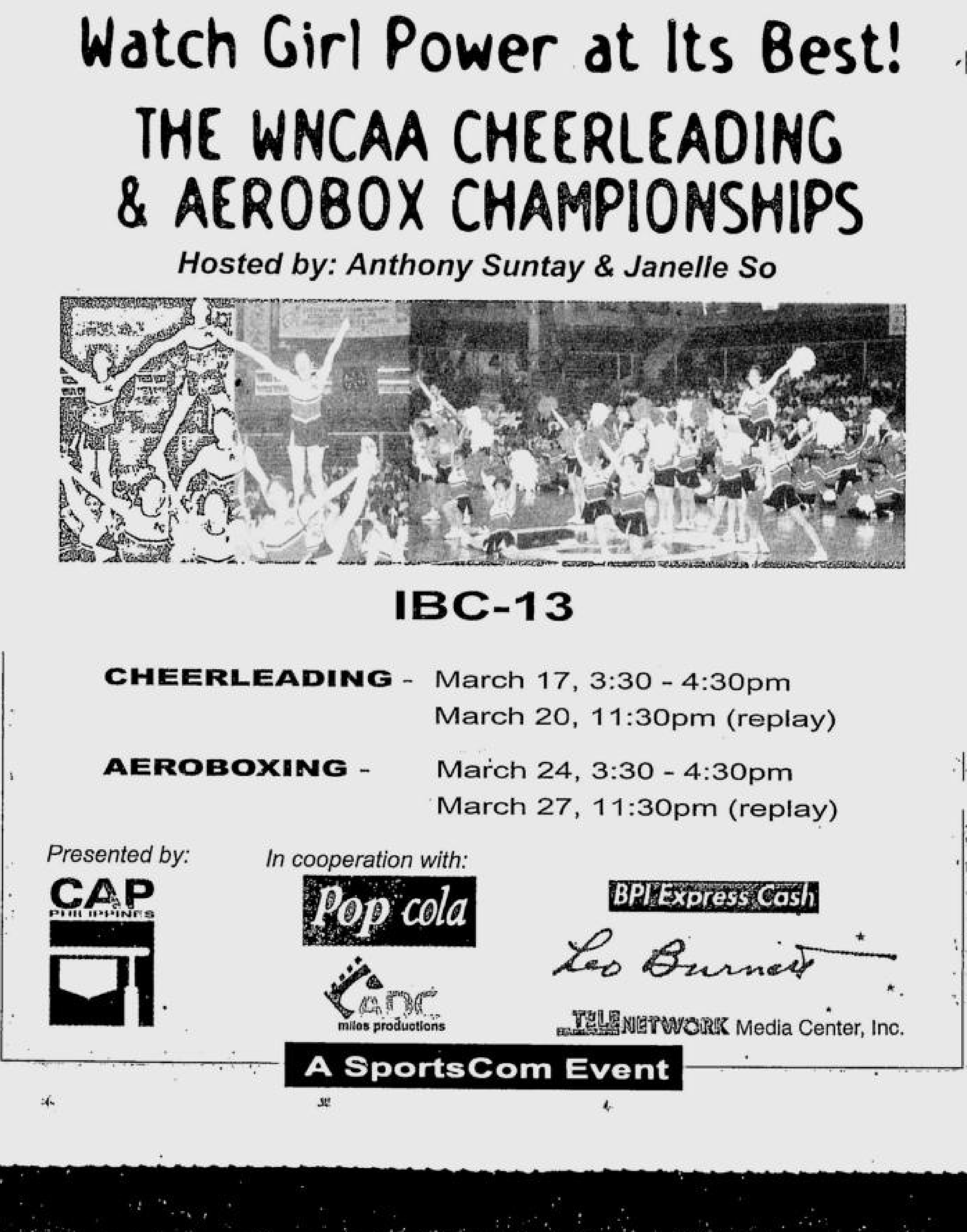

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SMC told to pay ₱10M to workers

BACOLOD CITY—The Court of Appeals has ordered San Miguel Corp. (SMC) to pay close to P10 million in full separation benefits and back wages to 98 workers of its defunct shrimp processing plant here.

In a decision dated Feb. 7, the CA ordered the SMC to pay the 98 members of the Purok Sun Flower Multi-Purpose Cooperative (PSMC) full benefits provided for in a 1995 Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Each worker was expected to receive more than P100,000 in lump sum benefits, said Wilfredo Talite, one of the complainants.

The cooperative members worked at the SMC Shrimp Processing Plant in Bacolod after SMC assistant vice president and area manager Leopoldo Titular entered into a non-exclusive contract of service with the PSMC through its chair Roy Asong.

When the plant closed on Sept. 15, 1995, the SMC did not give workers full separation benefits prompting the workers to file a case at the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC).

The NLRC had junked their petition on the ground that the cooperative members were "independent contractors" and not regular SMC employees. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

PAL@60

Gliding through history, soaring with the times

When a lone Beech Model 18 with only five passengers proudly stretches its wings in Asian skies 10 months before World War II breaks out in the Pacific, you just know it is destined to go on an endless journey with history.

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Philippines

Undaunted by the destruction, PAL resumed its operations in 1946, after the war. Boasting of five twin-engine Douglas DC-3s, eight local destinations and around 108 personnel – PAL again made history by being the first Asian airline to cross the Pacific when it chartered a Douglas DC-4 to fly American servicemen back to the United States.

From then on, PAL has expanded its operations, and even while the country was undergoing political discord during the Martial Law years, PAL was able to complete the construction of three aviation facilities.

@60
Philippine Airlines
Beyond A Proud Legacy

As the Philippines saw its rebirth after the People Power Revolution that culminated in EDSA in 1986, PAL has also reengineered itself under the administration of Mr. Dante Santos. In spite of having experienced huge financial losses during that time, the airline underwent a modernization program that strengthened its domestic fleet.

PAL was transferred to the private sector in 1992, with a consortium led by Mr. Antonio Cojuangco winning the bid for the majority of the shares. With the privatization, PAL has undergone several management changes ever since and has also expanded its international operations.

It was in 1995 that Dr. Lucio Tan took over the reins of the airline. Dr. Tan infused fresh capital that triggered the start of a massive restructuring program. This development was welcomed with much enthusiasm as the nation's flag carrier was aimed at making it big in the global airline industry.

But as fate would have it, PAL's foreseen advantage was dampened by the Asian currency crisis that hit the country in 1997 while the airline was in the middle of its refleeting program. Events took a turn for the worse as the PAL management was besieged by labor disputes after it downsized its manpower.

During this crucial period, PAL's operation was disrupted. But not for long. Two weeks after, PAL took to the skies again with a new hope and a stronger resolve to do better.

Tradition meets innovation

That resolution never waned. Figures culled from the end of the fiscal year 1999-2000 showed PAL posting a net profit of ₱46 million – a major reversal considering that the airline lost a whopping ₱10.181 billion in fiscal year 1998-1999.

At present, PAL is enjoying a dramatic turnaround in its profit, with its December 2000 earnings going over at least six percent of its projected revenues. And PAL owes this to the millions of loyal Filipinos supporting the flag carrier.

And for all its supporters, PAL has only its undying commitment to excellent service to give back.

Sunny smiles, having a pleasant disposition and gracious hospitality are just some of the many good traits that Filipinos are always known for. And in its years of darting the skies, PAL made sure that these traits are also on board every PAL airplane that travels the world.

A 60-year tradition of warm Filipino hospitality extended to its customers is always coupled with PAL's commitment to continuous improvement of its services. And the resolve to strive for excellent service is now also made possible by the surge of Internet technology.

Flight arrangements with the airline can now be done with PAL's Online Booking service. Starting April 1, this service will be fully interactive to allow ticket purchase through major credit card payments. Available to all customers anytime, anywhere throughout the PAL network by just logging on to www.philippineair.com

First rate service

Complementing its Online Booking service is the resumption of PAL's nonstop flights between Manila and Vancouver, British Columbia on April 3, 2001. Now, customers can again savor the convenience of riding with PAL three times weekly to Vancouver with its state-of-the-art Airbus 340-300. PAL will be the only carrier offering nonstop flights between the two points.

The British Columbia hub is PAL's third gateway to North America after Los Angeles and San Francisco. this way, passengers bound for interior and Eastern seaboard points in Canada and the United States have more choices for connecting flights.

Nonstop flights within the region are also available as PAL also flies four times weekly to Jakarta via Singapore aboard its luxurious Airbus 330-300 aircraft.

Soon, nonstop flights to Ho Chi Minh City will also be introduced.

Still, flights are not the only things going nonstop at PAL.

In its years of service to the nation, PAL is without a doubt still reeling from the turmoil that it has undergone in recent years. And these challenges will never cease and will continue to test the capacity of the airline to face up to the challenges.

But anchored on its glorious past and gaining inspiration from a promising future, PAL will certainly move on and soar high. Soaring even higher beyond the legacy that it has proudly built for the last 60 years.

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German cops get evidence on Irene deal

(From page A1)

Criminal Matters (Imac), a bilateral agreement, the PCGG asked Swiss authorities to verify the amount in the "885931" account and immediately channel the funds into an escrow account in a bank here.

In a phone interview, Schumacher confirmed that "the fact is that the account was opened by the Marcos family. And this had to do with money laundering."

He said that the Marcos family asked Deutsche Bank to open several accounts for them. "And then we acted. They said they (the Aranetas) would transfer (funds) from their bank in Switzerland. But we can't do (that)," he said.

Schumacher said his bank's part in the case was over. "We informed the authorities in Germany and they asked us to hold open the account to see what was going on," he told the INQUIRER.

Not a dollar

A spokesperson of the German criminal investigation office assigned to the case said the Araneta accounts in Deutsche Bank had been inactive since they were opened on Feb. 12.

UBS apparently did not follow Irene's alleged instructions to close the 885931 account and transfer the deposits to at least one Deutsche Bank account numbered 77690779.

"Not one mark or dollar. Nothing in it," said Frank Scheulen, spokesperson of the criminal investigation office, the Landeskriminalamt-NRW, of the Deutsch Bank account, which the bank closed four weeks after it was opened.

Weeks to over a year

Scheulen would not confirm whether the woman who identified herself as Irene Araneta and showed her passport at the bank was the real Marcos heiress.

"At this point, we cannot say if this is the daughter" of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, he said. He would also not comment on the evidence in the investigators' possession.

And he could not say how long the investigation would take. "There are some cases that take some weeks. There are some cases that take one-and-a-half years," he said.

Once the investigators wrap up their probe, they will give it to the justice officials in Dusseldorf, which is part of the populous North Rhine-Westaphalia region, he said.

He said the investigation would continue even if the personalities involved were not in Germany. "It is no problem if the person is in Germany, in Manila, or anywhere else," Scheulen said.

The Landeskriminalamt is investigating the suspected money-laundering case in cooperation with the public prosecutor's office in Dusseldorf.

Second look

Sarmiento said the PCGG expected the Swiss authorities to "take a second look" at the "I. Arenetta" account, which was first exposed by Australian investigator Reiner Jacobi in 1998.

The Imac petition was submitted by the PCGG to Beta Frey of the Federal Office for Police Matters section of the Imac in Bern and to Dieter Jann of the Office of District Attorney in Zurich.

Sarmiento said the PCGG has also tasked embassy officials in Germany to coordinate with German authorities and bank officials so Manila could seek a freeze order on Araneta's alleged Deutsche Bank accounts—even though they reportedly contain no money.

"We've been filing these Imac petitions based on the documents we have from the Swiss authorities, Malacañang and Marcoses," Sarmiento said, without being more specific.

Amid accusations of the PCGG's incompetence and the lack of leadership in the agency, Sarmiento retorted that its officials were working very hard and "not just sitting and waiting for Chair Haydee Yorac to assume the position."

Malacañang announced the other day that Yorac, the feisty former chair of the Commission on Elections, would be taking over the job after the national elections in May.

Precedent

Sarmiento said the PCGG was hopeful that if the funds are found to exist they could be reclaimed in line with a precedent set in 1995 when the Swiss government ordered the transfer of $356 million in Marcos money to an escrow account in Manila.

The money, which with interest has grown to around $632 million, is still in escrow at the Philippine National Bank pending the Marcos family's appeal against a Sandiganbayan decision awarding the funds to the government.

"It will take a long time, but the good thing is that we have a precedent," Sarmiento told reporters. "If we can prove the money is there and we have this precedent, we can be sure that it would be brought back to the Philippines."

"The deposits of the Marcoses in Switzerland came from illegitimate sources, so if this Irene account really exists, then the same judgment that Swiss Federal Supreme Court will apply and the funds will be repatriated to the Philippines," said PCGG director for research Danilo Daniel.

The PCGG also reiterated in the Imac petition the freeze order on all Marcos assets and the request to "transmit all bank statements, account opening forms and other documentation related to the accounts" of the Marcos family, particularly to the recent alleged transactions of Irene and Greggy.

Humble pie

And, apparently eating humble pie, Sarmiento opened the door to a working relationship with the PCGG's most vociferous critics, including former Solicitor General Frank Chavez, by saying the agency would appreciate it Chavez would share the documents given to him by Jacobi pertaining to the alleged money laundering attempt.

"As of now, they have not given us anything," Sarmiento said. "We're calling on Attorney Chavez, even if he's angry at the PCGG, to show us the evidence."

He added: "Or if he does not want (to show it to the PCGG), then at least (show it to) the Senate blue ribbon committee."

For his part, Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the blue ribbon committee was verifying the INQUIRER reports that the Aranetas tried to launder their Swiss funds.

"I'd like to say that I have already instructed our staff to make a background check on the materials published by a newspaper regarding the Marcos wealth. We want to find out whether there is basis for looking into it more seriously," Pimentel said.

He also took exception to accusations that the committee was "dragging its ass" on the inquiry into the Marcos ill-gotten wealth.

"It's not true at all," he said, reacting to the remark from Chavez.

'Excuses'

"As a matter of fact we invited his witness (Jacobi) to kindly come over here but they are making so many excuses so we just have to call off the investigation in so far as that is concerned. But we are not giving up on the search for the Marcos wealth. We will continue to do so," Pimentel said in an interview.

David Chaikin, Jacobi's lawyer, had also hit Pimentel's committee for not bothering to verify with the German government information that the Marcos heirs tried to move the money from Switzerland to Germany.

"Of course we did," Pimentel retorted. "He did not know that, but we had to course the questions through our embassies and through the PCGG because the blue ribbon committee had no direct contact with the German authorities. That was the reason why we had to do it through our diplomatic channels."

Chavez defends Jacobi

Chavez called on the government to reappoint Jacobi, who had exposed the latest alleged money-laundering attempt, as Manila's consultant and liaison officer in Europe to recover the Marcoses' alleged hidden billions.

He reiterated that US authorities had dismissed a 1991 indictment against Jacobi used by Swiss and Philippine officials to discredit the Australian investigator.

"Now, it is clear to the whole world that he was never a con man or a forger, as the Ramos and Estrada administrations (claimed)," Chavez said.

He said Jacobi tracked down the Marcos Swiss deposits and had convinced German authorities of the worth of his supposed evidence, despite continued attempts by the PCGG and the Swiss banks to portray him as a fraud.

"And what was the PCGG's response? It tried to belittle all (Jacobi's) efforts until it looked so stupid and was embarrassed by the ongoing investigation in Germany," he said.

Chavez repeated that Swiss advisers and lawyers of the PCGG had allegedly done nothing but cover up the Swiss banks' "lies," and protect the Marcoses' alleged Swiss deposits from being discovered.

"The PCGG is like a badly broken-down machine on its way to the junkyard, and its operators are mastering the difficult art of doing nothing," Chavez said.

Too busy for small stuff

Jacobi was confident that if he were re-appointed by the Philippine government, he would be able to pin down the Marcoses before long.

Chavez also expressed disappointment over the way that President Macapagal-Arroyo has addressed the issue so far. He said that Executive Secretary Renato de Villa did not express any interest in following up the case for the Office of the President after Chavez contacted him two weeks ago about the matter.

"The Office of the President could have done something right away. But no, it did not do anything," Chavez said.

"Maybe it is too busy for this little stuff," he said.

Since Marcos was toppled in 1986, the PCGG has recovered P79 billion ($1.65 billion) of Marcos money and assets. It has been estimated that Marcos and his allies stole billions more from the country before he was overthrown. *With reports from Juliet Javellana; AFP and AP*

Money no problem for May 14 elections

(From page A1)

tion inspectors in the precincts on Election Day.

Boncodin said the DBM was also prepared to release P900,000 from the continuing appropriations of the Comelec in case there was a need for additional funding.

The amount was less than half of the P1.9 billion being requested by the poll body from the President's Contingency Fund as additional budget for the elections.

Boncodin said the DBM was "prepared to give P200 million but if the expenditures could be kept to at least P150 million, then that will mean big savings for the government."

Comelec Commissioner Rex Borra on Wednesday said the poll body might need P150 million to P200 million to hold the special registration since it has to print at least five million voter's registration forms in addition to the existing 800,000 VRFs.

"We will release that as soon as the appropriate legal basis is there," Boncodin told the INQUIRER at the launching of the National Library's website.

Special session

Congress is scheduled to hold a three-day special session starting Monday to discuss twin bills in the House and Senate seeking to allow the Comelec to hold a special registration not later than April 2.

The special session will be for some 4.5 million new voters who failed to register on or before the deadline on Dec. 27.

The Comelec had earlier said it could not hold a special registration because a law prohibited the listing of voters within 120 days before an election.

To compel the Comelec to hold a special registration, Bayan Muna, a group aspiring for party-list representation in the 12th Congress, yesterday filed a petition with the Supreme Court asking it to order a special registration for new voters on March 31 and April 7.

Miriam to boycott session

Opposition reelectionist Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said she would not attend the special session called by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Santiago said she would call on other opposition lawmakers to boycott the special session because, according to her, the administration would just make use of the special registration to insert fictitious names into the voters' list.

Fellow opposition senatorial candidate Juan Ponce Enrile, also a reelectionist, said he would attend the special session.

But he expressed doubts that Congress could pass the special law within three days.

Another opposition senator, John Osmeña, said he would block attempts to railroad the special registration bill in the Senate.

But Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the special registration bill could be fast-tracked by converting the Senate into a committee of the whole.

Osmeña said he would demand that the bill be subjected to public hearings and debated thoroughly on the floor.

"You know in the Senate, the debates are endless," he said.

Osmeña said the Comelec should be called to public hearings in the Senate to ensure that the new list-up would not be used to favor certain administration candidates.

"I'm not going to block it but I want the issues properly ventilated so we have to call in the Comelec," he said.

Osmeña said the public hearings alone could consume two of the three days of the special session. He said the special session might have to be extended.

But Pimentel was optimistic a special registration bill could be approved within the three-day special session. He said 12 senators had already assured him of their attendance.

Bayan Muna petition

In a 20-page petition, Bayan Muna said Section 126 of the Omnibus Election Code allowed the Comelec to conduct a special registration on March 31 and April 7.

If this is not possible, the group said the tribunal could order the Comelec to conduct the special registration of new voters under Section 28 of Republic Act 8436 and Section 29 of RA 6646 before the May 14 elections.

Bayan Muna noted that only 282,482 out of the estimated four million qualified new voters had availed themselves of the Comelec's continuing registration system, which ended on Dec. 27, 2000.

This discrepancy prompted 19-year-old Michelle Betito earlier this week to file her own petition with the Supreme Court asking it to compel the Comelec to hold the special registration.

Bayan Muna said the Comelec's continuing registration system had failed since it accommodated less than one percent of new voters in the country.

The Comelec was mandated to begin yesterday with the inspection of the Voter's Registration Records for each precinct compiled in the book of voters who registered on or before Dec. 27, 2000.

The Comelec also has to complete by March 19 the Project of Precincts, which shall indicate the total number of established precincts and the number of registered voters per precinct in a city or municipality.

The Board of Election Inspectors should have been constituted on March 14.

Election officers must furnish all candidates and political parties with the list of the members of the BEI, including the precinct where they are assigned and the barangay where that precinct is located, not later than March 26.

The Book of Voters, which contains the approved Voter Registration Records of registered voters in a particular precinct, must be inspected, verified and sealed beginning March 30 until April 15.

The preparation, bidding, printing and distribution of the Voters Information Sheet must be completed on or before April 15.

Pay hikes . . .

(From page A1)

paid benefits of police officers, who retired in 1999.

Another P4 billion is needed to pay the retirement benefits of some 5,000 retirees this year.

Boncodin said the proposed supplemental budget might be included in the agenda of the three-day special session of Congress.

Special registration

The session was called to take up twin bills in the House of Representatives and the Senate seeking the conduct of special registration for first-time voters, who failed to register on or before the deadline on Dec. 27, 2000.

Boncodin had earlier said that the DBM would freeze government salaries this year and cut the number of government employees as part of cost-cutting measures aimed at keeping the budget deficit below P145 billion.

Because the delay in the passage of the P725-billion national budget for 2001 had put on hold the mandatory 5-percent salary increase this year, the supplemental budget was necessary so that the salary increase could be granted, Boncodin said.

The government is operating on last year's budget of P649 billion.

Boncodin had earlier said that the inclusion of the salary increase in the supplemental budget as proposed by Sen. John Osmeña was unlikely.

The budget secretary said that including the salary increase in the supplemental budget would encourage a number of agencies to lobby for additional funding.

In February, Boncodin said that Malacañang would ask the new Congress for a P20-billion supplemental budget to cover additional financial requirements.

Osmeña said the Senate finance committee's budget allocation for 2001 was P701 billion, or P52 billion higher than the previous year's budget.

The Senate budget allocation covered increases in the salaries of government employees, the internal revenue allocation of local government units and debt service payments.

At the Employment Summit, Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor, who presented the administration's policy on labor and job generation, said a review of the labor department's Order No. 10 on labor contractualization was a government priority.

The Department of Labor and Employment issued the order in 1997.

Labor groups attending the summit sought the repeal of the order, saying that it be "substituted with another rule that the social partners may negotiate."

"Labor-only contracting in government should also be stopped," Trade Union Congress of the Philippines chair Democrito Mendoza said.

The labor groups also sought the creation of "quick response teams" to attend to the displacement of workers.

A million jobs

Montemayor said the government would create more than a million job opportunities this year with the implementation of infrastructure projects in different parts of the country.

In her speech, the President promised to help create "more and more jobs for more and more Filipinos" even as she admitted that the unemployment rate remained at 11.2 percent.

"To date, almost 3.5 million Filipinos want work but cannot find work and almost six million among the employed want additional work but they cannot find" one, she said.

Former Speaker Manny Villar, a senatorial candidate, said one out of 10 Filipinos in the labor force is jobless.

"This translates to more than 3 million Filipinos who are willing to work but cannot find jobs," he said in statement.

He vowed to pursue legislation to spur employment opportunities.

Ms Macapagal said the government would try to do away with "patronage politics," which people with connections use to find employment for their friends and relatives.

"Equal access to work opportunities is particularly important in view of the remnants of the old system of patronage and favoritism not only in politics, but also in employment," the President said.

She lamented that even her father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal, was forced to once "seek the help of influential persons to help him in his first job."

The President said this happened even if her father had topped the civil service examination.

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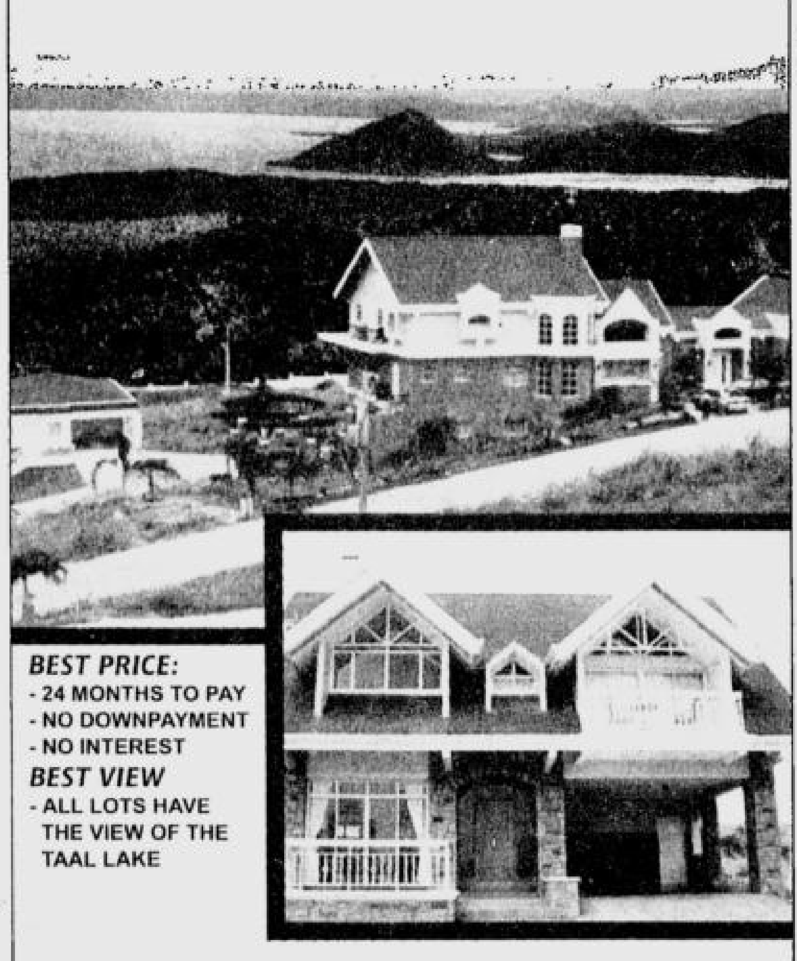

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Colonel, 9 cops get death for drug bribe

(From page A1)

"The drug problem has grown unabated and we hope this would be a lesson to all policemen."

Convicted with Ovilla were Senior Insp. Edwin Misador, SPO4 Florendo Lucila, SPO3 Benjamin Fonacier, SPO2 Teodoro Lado, SPO1 Ronnie Rodaje and Orencio Jurado, PO3 Orlin Comia and Manuel Malong and PO2 Ladislao Rebancos.

The judge acquitted SPO1 Eusebio Zambrano Jr. after the court deemed as merely "coincidental" his presence at Station 9 during the period covering the arrest and release of the drug suspects.

Another co-accused, Supt. Loreto de la Cruz, died of cardiac arrest in April last year while in detention.

The judge, in his 47-page decision, commended two other policemen—SPO2 Reynato Resureccion and PO2 Wilfredo Gonzales—who "mustered the courage" to blow the whistle on Ovilla and their colleagues.

Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza, acting chief of the Philippine National Police, yesterday commended Resureccion and Gonzales and recommended them for promotion to the next higher rank.

Mendoza welcomed the court's decision saying "it strengthens the resolve of the PNP to cleanse the ranks of undesirable policemen."

Mendoza said Resureccion and Gonzales are worthy of emulation by their peers, as he expressed hope that all PNP personnel will steadfastly guard the organization against "bad eggs" no matter who they are.

In an interview after the verdict was read, Gonzales said he was "both happy and sad" because he was able to do his share in ridding the service of scalawags but he had to do this at the expense of his superior and fellow officers.

Days of prayer

In sending 10 men to the death chamber, Judge Peralta said in an interview that "I'm only human but I have a duty to perform," adding that he came to such judgment after days of prayer.

The police officers got the death verdict for the bribery charge and a prison term of up to 12 years for graft.

Some of their relatives broke into tears upon hearing the sentence. Ovilla's wife Marilou grew hysterical and was seen hitting a tabloid photographer with her handbag in a fit of rage.

Ovilla remained composed during the one-and-a-half-hour court proceeding. Court records showed that he was never called to the witness stand during trial after entering a "not guilty" plea during arraignment.

On Aug. 22, 1999, police officers led by Ovilla formed themselves into a team that conducted a buy-bust operation on suspected drug dealers Jimmy Tan alias Tony and Albert Koo alias Randy Koo.

The trial established that the operation was successful: the drug suspects yielded 1.5 kilos of shabu worth P750,000 in a mock transaction set up at a McDonald's branch at SM City, North Edsa, Quezon City.

But then the policemen conspired to remove all records of the arrest in the police station's logbook.

Based on the testimonies of Resureccion and Gonzales, the two Chinese suspects were only detained for a few hours at the police precinct and released before dawn of Aug. 23, with another Chinese-looking man fetching them and delivering the bribe money.

The bribery angle was established by the eyewitness testimony provided by Gonzales, who said that on Aug. 25 he was called by Ovilla to his office and gave him his "*parte*" (share) amounting to P15,000.

Prior to this, Gonzales got word from colleagues Lucila, Comia and Rodaje that the bribe money delivered to Ovilla totaled P650,000.

Another prosecution witness, the station's errand boy Gerardo Villaroel, recalled seeing a "two-inch thick bundle of money consisting of P500 bills" under Ovilla's bed on Aug. 23.

Commendation

Gonzales and Resureccion sought the help of then Quezon City congressman and now presidential housing adviser Michael Defensor in exposing the bribery to the press. Their revelations triggered a congressional inquiry.

Judge Peralta commended Defensor and the watchdog Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) for their "vigilance" in seeing the case to its conclusion.

"Let this be a warning to all drug-lord coddlers in the Philippine National Police," VACC chair Dante Jimenez said after the promulgation. ***With reports from Dave Veridiano and AFP***

Palace . . .

(From page A1)

who was tasked by Malacañang to look into the request of Maynilad.

The finance chief also said Meralco should wait for the decision of the Supreme Court on the issue of an appropriate computation of the return-on-rate-base, or RORB, before it can be granted a power rate increase.

Maynilad as well as Ayala-owned Manila Water Co. have asked the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System to approve their petitions to apply an accelerated and automatic currency adjustment or auto-Cera to factor in costs of the peso depreciation in loans they had absorbed from MWSS when they won concessions to operate the West and East Zones respectively.

Maynilad had absorbed about 90 percent of MWSS loans.

Water consumers believe that their water bills would skyrocket if the rate hike petitions of Maynilad and Manila Water are granted.

They estimate that from an average P118.90 water bill monthly for 30-cubic meters of water, a consumer would have to shell out as much as P355.76 with the proposed auto-Cera.

Under the present concession agreement, the two water firms are allowed to charge consumers P1 per cubic meter. They are also allowed to adjust their tariffs if there had been fluctuations in currency exchange through the EPA.

Approving the auto-Cera would revise the concession agreements that both water companies had signed with MWSS when it was privatized in 1997.

Meralco

Meralco is seeking a 30-centavos per kilowatt-hour distribution rate increase to prop up its RORB from 6 percent back to 11 percent being required by their creditors.

"I think they should wait for the Supreme Court decision on the earlier issue of RORB," said Romulo.

The country's largest electric distributor was sued by the Energy Regulatory Board in 1998 for overcharging after the regulator discovered that Meralco had been including income tax and other assets not related to power distribution in its RORB computation, which effectively shrinks the base and gives an impression of diminished profitability.

Meralco won a case in the Court of Appeals but it was elevated by the government to the Supreme Court where it is pending to this day.

Consumer groups allege that Meralco is in fact enjoying an RORB of 22 percent at current rates. Its petition for a 30-centavo-per-kwh rate increase would boost its profitability by as much as 30 percent.

Meralco had been asked by ERB to give a rebate of P11.8 billion to its consumers for overcharging from 1994 to 1998. Consumer groups believe the distribution company now owes them about P18 billion for overcharging.

Romulo said the Macapagal administration would balance the concerns of civil societies over that of private companies. "We have to consult civil society on these issues," he said.

TRIVIA: Do you know that the graduation robe we now call the Toga traces its roots to the daily attire of ancient Roman citizens? However, Togas of old bore very little resemblance to present-day graduation robes. Back then, Togas were draped around the arms and body like an oversized bath towel. By the way, that cap you don with a toga upon graduation is really called a "Mortar Board."

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Ericsson-Smart Zed golf at Sherwood

By Jong Arcano

ABSENT the past two legs due to their Davidoff Asian Tour commitments, reigning Philippine Open champion Gerald Rosales and two other top guns will make their debuts in the new local professional tour when the Ericsson-Smart Zed Sherwood Hills Classic is staged March 22-25.

The long-awaited entry of Rosales, Rodrigo Cuello and Danny Zarate, and the return of the multi-titled Cassius Casas and Canadian ace Rick Gibson will complete the strongest cast to be assembled so far in the burgeoning circuit.

They will be leading a field of no less than 75 players vying for the large chunks of the P700,000 cash kitty put up by two telecommunications giants–Ericsson and Smart–which are both returning to bigtime golf sponsorship.

Philippine Tour chair Bob Sobrepeña said during a press conference yesterday at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel that the re-entry of the two firms is an expression of confidence given by the corporate sector to the new tour.

"We see the generous support of our friends from Ericsson and Smart as a very positive sign for our goal of holding a circuit that will have a strong impact not just in the country but in the region as well," said Sobrepeña.

Firms like College Assurance Plan, the Fil-Estate Group of Companies, the Metro Rail Transit Corp. and the La Paz Holdings Dev't. Corp. are also throwing their support as presenters for the first full pro event to be held at Sherwood Hills' championship course in Trece Martirez, Cavite.

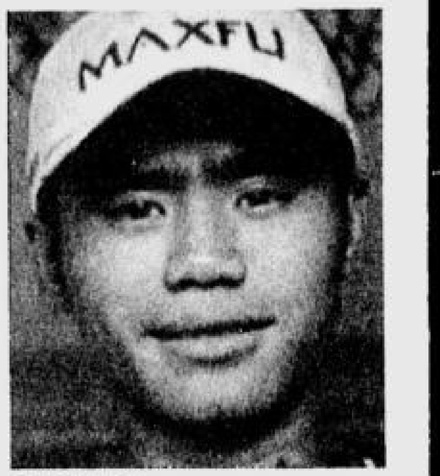
CAP is also the chief backer of an accompanying 36-hole event for senior pros.

Also gracing the affair were CAP chair and CEO Enrique Sobrepeña, Ericsson president Robert Etteborn, Telecoms Specialist, Inc. president Greg Atienza, Smart PCMSD head Anastacio Martirez, Sherwood vice chair Federico Campos, Ericsson vice president Derick Gamboa and 'Gabay sa Makabayang Alay Foundation president Rafael Evangelista.

As the Asian Tour will be taking a long break after the ongoing Indian Open, all of the local top guns save for Frankie Miñoza will be slugging it out at Sherwood Hills.

Rosales is the best-performing RP bet in the Asian Tour with winnings of $19,963 that puts him in 13th spot.

The presence of the heavyweights will put a lot of pressure on Richard Sinfuego and Rey Pagunsan, who had won the first two legs at Southwoods and Camp John Hay, respectively.



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N. Cotabato hosts Pacquiao defense

PACQUIAO

NORTH Cotabato, boxing capital of the Philippines in Mindanao, plays host to Manny Pacquiao's fifth WBC International super bantamweight title defense on April 28 at the Provincial Capitol grounds in Amas, Kidapawan City.

Gov. Manny Piñol and promoter Gabriel "Bebot" Elorde yesterday came to-terms in a contract-signing also attended by Pacquiao's business manager Rod Nazario and local government official Maybell Valedvieso at the Royal Palm Hotel.

"We are very thankful to Gov. Piñol for offering his home province to be the venue of Pacquiao's fight," said Elorde.

Titled "Rumblin by the Mountain 2," the boxing spectacle will feature the 22-year-old Pacquiao against another title pretender in Wethya Sakmuangklang of Thailand.

Piñol said the proceeds of the fight, which will also have brothers Juanito and Ernesto Rubillar staking their respective WBC diadems, will go to the Sports Development Program of Mindanao.

Pacquiao, a former WBC flyweight champion, is fresh from a fifth round stoppage of North Korean Tetsutora Senrima barely three weeks back in Antipolo City.

His victory over Senrima improved his fight record to 31 wins and two loses spiked by 21 knockouts.

Kidapawan City also played host to Pacquiao and his entourage in 1999 when the slugger from General Santos City fought in a non-title bout against Australian Todd Makelin. *June Navarro*

China giant to NBA

BEIJING—They're tall, talented and form the towers of China's "Walking Great Wall."

After two years of hesitation and negotiations, China has decided to let one of its top basketball players—2.16-meter (7-foot-1) tall Wang Zhizhi—join the NBA. Speculation is mounting that 2.26-meter (7-5) Yao Ming won't be far behind.

Forget about China's entry into the World Trade Organization. For sports-crazy Chinese fans, having Wang and Yao in the world's top basketball league would be proof indeed that China is joining the global elite.

With their Nike endorsements, ardent fans and towering physiques, Wang and Yao are poster boys for how market-reform China sees itself more open, international and growing stronger by the day.

The two young players could help China and the United States—whose ties are often strained—understand each other better. Call them the 21st century follow-up to "pingpong diplomacy," the 1971 visit to China by the US table tennis team that helped thaw the Cold War.

Wang will be the first to go. For the moment, his army-run team, the Bayi Rockets, needs the 23-year-old center for another championship run in China's six-season-old professional league.

The Rockets' best-of-five finals against Yao's Shanghai Sharks conclude by March 25 at latest. After that, the Rockets and the Chinese Basketball Association have decided that Wang can join the Dallas Mavericks for the rest of the NBA season, association spokesman Xu Minfeng said.

SPORTSWATCH

Trinidad heads 3-bout series

NEW YORK—Promoter Don King called Felix Trinidad the eye of the hurricane. IBF middleweight champion Bernard Hopkins said, "The prize in the Cracker Jack box is Felix Trinidad Jr." Whatever the WBA-IBF junior middleweight champion is called, there's no question he is the star of a potentially marvelous three-bout series at Madison Square Garden to crown an undisputed middleweight champion. "I don't think I'd be in this tournament if he wasn't in it," said the 35-year-old Hopkins, a 72.575-kilogram (160-pound) champion since 1995, Wednesday at a news conference also attended by Trinidad and the other two middleweight champs -Keith Holmes (WBC) and William Joppy (WBA). Victories over Oscar De La Hoya, Pernell Whitaker, David Reid and Fernando Vargas on national television have made Trinidad the best known of the four champions, who have a combined 46-1-3 record, with 36 knockouts, in title bouts. The series will kick off with Hopkins (38-1-2, 29 knockouts) fighting the 32-year-old Holmes (34-0-2, 23 knockouts) on April 14 in The Theater at the Garden. It will be televised by HBO. Trinidad (39-0-0, 32 knockouts) will fight the 30-year-old Joppy (32-1-1, 24 knockouts) on pay-per-view (TVKO) in the main Garden arena May 12. *AP*

Venus, Serena set up showdown

INDIAN WELLS, California—Venus and Serena Williams each lost just three games in quarterfinals Wednesday to set up a sibling showdown that is a reprise of last year's Wimbledon semifinals. Venus Williams overpowered Elena Dementieva 6-0, 6-3 in a rematch of the Olympic final in Sydney, also won by Williams. Serena Williams, the 1999 U.S. Open champion, avenged last year's loss at Flushing Meadows to Lindsay Davenport by breezing to a 6-1, 6-2 win, her sixth in eight matches against Davenport. In the men's Masters Series second round, Andre Agassi beat Tommy Haas 7-6 (5), 6-3; Pete Sampras defeated Fabrice Santoro 6-3, 3-6, 6-0; and top-ranked Gustavo Kuerten beat Taylor Dent 6-4, 6-7 (5), 6-2. The Williams sisters, who rarely play in the same tournaments except for the Grand Slams, will face each other for only the sixth time as pros. Venus, last year's Wimbledon and U.S. Open champion, has beaten her sister four times, including a 6-2, 7-6 (3) victory at Wimbledon. Serena's only victory in the sibling rivalry was a 6-1, 3-6, 6-3 decision in Munich, Germany, in 1999. *AP*

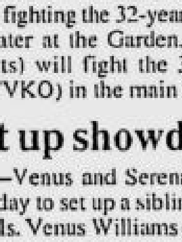
Pasay 4-cock derby on today

MORE than 35 cockers and derbyists from Metro Manila are seeing action in another 4-cock derby today at the classy Pasay City Cockpit. An elegant trophy donated by Thunderbird Power Feeds will be awarded to the champion of this event, hosted by veteran handler/gaffer Noli Estrellado and Albert Nayon. Some 70 fast-faced fights are lined up tomorrow beginning at 7 p.m. according to PCC managers Oscar Gonzales, Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano. Among the favorites are *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio, Pol Estrellado, Blandy Tolentino, Tony Tan, Ucap president Butch Macasaet, Raymond Velayo, Muroy Dolorico, Lito Orillaza, lawyer Rudy Salud, Johnny Elorde, Mayor Nene Aguilar and Cito Manansala, among others. For inquiries, please contact 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750.

Chess clinic listing tomorrow

ENROLLMENT for the first series of Milo Checkmate summer clinics starts at 8 a.m.-12 noon tomorrow, March 17, at the Badminton Bldg., Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, Vito Cruz, Manila and from 2-6 p.m. at the 2/F Center Mall, Greenhills Shopping Center in San Juan. Interested parties may call MCC at 826-8560. Open to all young chess enthusiasts who are 5 years old and above, the clinic consists of 7-day chess lectures and two-day tournaments. Among the courses offered are for preparatory; beginners; intermediate; and advanced players. Clinics will also be held in other areas, namely, Fairview–April 6-11; Cavite, Paranaque and Marikina–April 9-15; Las Pinas, Alabang and Laguna–April 16-25; Malolos, Angeles City, Olongapo, Urdaneta and Dagupan–April 26-30.

Manila elected WNC head



MANILA

MA. Vivian Manila of St. Scholastica's College-Manila was elected as president of the Women's National Collegiate Athletic Association for a third straight term recently. Manila is the Dean of Student Affairs of SSC. Elected as vice president is Josefina Espino, P.E. directress of Lyceum of the Philippines. The other newly-elected officers for WNCAA's 2001 season are Angela dela Cruz of St. Benedict, secretary; Lim Eng Peng of St. Stephens, treasurer; Dennis Sajo of Miriam College, auditor; Jacob Uichico of Assumption College; and Yolanda Co of Chiang Kai Shek, directors.

And in line with its objective to make the league truly national in scope, the WNCAA also elected its first-ever set of officers for WNCAA-Central Luzon. Elected were Rev. Msgr. Edgardo P. Pangan, JCD of University of the Assumption (Pampanga) as honorary chairperson; Mr. Donny M. Sayre, also of UA, as regional coordinator; Graciano "Jun" David of Holy Angel University, assistant regional director; Raul Villaluz of Sta. Cruz Academy (Lubao, Pampanga), secretary; and Raquel Mendoza of Bulacan State University, treasurer.

NBA results

Washington 103, Detroit 96; Orlando 97 Cleveland 87; Miami 114 Sacramento 104; Charlotte 100, Vancouver 95. San Antonio 106, Minnesota 100, OT; Philadelphia 85, Chicago 67; Denver 95, Indiana 83; Phoenix 84, Portland 79; Utah 102, Golden State 83. **AP**

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled By Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA – Toronto Raptors vs New York Knicks at 8:30 a.m. (r- 9 p.m.) on Star Sports

US NCAA - Big 10 Tournament, Quarterfinal #2 at 1 p.m. (delayed) on ESPN

NBA Inside Stuff at 8:30 p.m. on Star Sports

GOLF: PGA - The Honda Classic, Tour Highlights at 7:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

Inside the PGA Tour at 12 noon (r- 8 p.m.) on Star Sports

PGA Bay Hill Invitational, First Round at 11:30 p.m. on Star Sports

TENNIS: Masters Series (Indian Wells), Early Round Coverage Day #3 at 11 a.m. (r), Day 4 at 4:30 p.m. on ESPN

ATP Citrix Tennis Championships, Finals at 2:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

WRESTLING: WCW Nitro at 12:30 p.m. and tomorrow at 1 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

RACING TIPS

At San Lazaro By Mr. 999

Race 1—1. Golden Tale 2. Storm Rising 3. Party Princess 4. Rainmaker

Race 2—1. Kingair 2. Clear Night Sky 3. Arch Rival 4. Red Thunder

Race 3—1. Vanicx 2. Lucky Swing 3. Wishing Well 4. Contra Barata

Race 4—1. Truthful Lady 2. Justine's Quest 3. Glory Be

Race 5—1. Corridor of Power 2. Leverage Buyer/Spice of Life 3. Doctor's Advice 4. Wag Ingay

Race 6—1. Man of the Hour 2. Notable 3. Roppongi 4. Lucky Fil

Race 7—1. Bold Freddy 2. The Topnotcher 3. Mighty Warrior 4. Gun Express

Race 8—1. Gimme A Ring 2. Big Kahuna 3. Dancing Dragon 4. Oishi Oishi

England's Legend wins at Santa Anita

ARCADIA, California —England's Legend won her first race in the United States on Wednesday, breezing to a 2 1/2-length victory over Satin Cat in the $60,000 feature race at Santa Anita. Ridden by Corey Nakatani and carrying 53 kilograms (118 pounds), England's Legend covered 1.8 kilometers (1 1-8 miles) on turf in 1:46 4-5 and paid $10, $6 and $4. *AP*

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor **EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA**, Assistant Editor

PBA games today

GAMES TODAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
5:15 p.m.—Mobiline vs Tanduay
7:30 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Purefoods

TEAMS at the lowest rungs of the standings get to do something about their respective fading campaigns when they mix it up today in the PBA All-Filipino Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Mobiline, Tanduay Gold, Sta. Lucia Realty and Purefoods—all in danger of getting booted out of the quarterfinals—can still make some last-ditch measures with a victory here.

The Phone Pals are taking on the Rhummasters, while the Realtors are squaring off with the Hotdogs in the race to make the top eight teams next round.

So what's wrong with these teams?

Mobiline lacks chemistry aside from the fact that it doesn't have a regular slotman in tow. Tanduay has become a rag-tag team that relies solely on Jeffrey Cariaso.

Sta. Lucia couldn't put its enviable lineup into good use, while Purefoods is reeling from internal problems.

Marc Anthony Reyes

BATTLE OF CHAMPIONS

Lakers shock RP 5

BY ROY LUARCA

GAMES TODAY (Camp Vicente Lim, Laguna)
2 p.m.—Cebu Lhuillier vs Joonang U (Korea)
3:30 p.m.—Laguna Lakers vs Wang's Ball Club

CALAMBA, Laguna—Cebu Lhuillier got what it expected from reinforcement Bobby Parks and defeated Wang's Ball Club, 85-80, yesterday in the 1st Bert Lina-Jam Mercado Battle of Champions at the Camp Vicente Lim Gym here.

In the second game, the Laguna Lakers exploited the absence of Rommel Adducul to stun the RP men's team, 87-82.

Adducul sustained an eye injury in the first quarter and without the 6-foot-5 center, the Lakers, behind Cris Clay and Biboy Simon, earned their first win in three games. RP fell to 2-1.

Parks, a seven-time PBA best import, topscored with 25 points and ruled the boards for the Jewelers, who posted their second straight win in the five-team, single round tournament.

Supporting Parks in the offensive end was hotshot Ronald Paraiso, who tallied 21 points for the Jewelers, the reigning National Interclub and Cebuano Basketball League President's Cup titlists.

Wang's gave Lhuillier a scare when it came to within 77-74 on back-to-back triples by Ramil Ferma.

A triple by former Cebu Gem Renato Alforque, however, stopped Wang's, the National Inter-Municipalities champion while representing Mandaluyong, on its track as it absorbed its second straight setback.

Alforque wound up with 10 points, just like the ageless Daryl Smith, another former PBA import.

With Parks overpowering his guards and Paraiso sniping, Lhuillier surged ahead 45-31 at halftime before allowing Wang's to nibble at the lead.

Joonang University of Korea, which totes a 1-1 card, drew a bye and will see action against Lhuillier today in the tournament organized by the National Basketball League and supported by Healthy Options, Jam Transit and Federal Express.

The scores:

CEBU 85—Parks 25, Paraiso 21, Alforque 10, Smith 10, Alvarado 7, Dumdum 4, Jaca 4, Enriquez 2, Ocanada 2.

WANG'S 80—Ellenger 17, Lagare 15, Pile 12, Pinzon 9, David 7, Giron 6, Ferma 4, Orillosa 3, Magbanua 2, Tanseco 2, Bunyi 1.

Halftime: 45-31

Baculi wants 'perfect' team

BY JUNE NAVARRO

NEW Philippine basketball team head coach Junel Baculi is still picturing a perfect lineup the Philippine Basketball League could offer in the Southeast Asian Basketball Association Championship.

With the tournament barely three weeks away, Baculi is hard-pressed finalizing the composition of the team, which he said will be known next week after consultations with assistant coaches Leo Austria and Leo Isaac.

"Since we are still in the organizational stage, expect the final lineup in a week's time," said Baculi, Welcoat's keen-eyed mentor.

The Seaba championships will run from April 2-9 at the Philsports Arena with six countries, including the Philippines, competing.

Welcoat's Yancy de Ocampo, who failed to attend yesterday's practice due to a bum stomach, will join teammates Ren Ren Ritualo, Jojo Manalo, Eugene Tan, Celino Cruz, Shark's Chester Tolomia, Gilbert Malabanan, Ryzal Castro, Giv Soap's Egay Billones and Marlon Legaspi in the country's Seaba campaign.

Ateneo-Pioneer's Rainier Sison, Enrico Villanueva and Rich Alvarez, along with Gilbert Lao and Jacques Gottenbos of Montaña, were also tapped to don the national colors.

Meanwhile, the women's national basketball team, fearing the fate that befell their male counterparts, agreed to submit themselves under the direct supervision of the Philippine Olympic Committee.

Basketball chief Freddie Jalasco yesterday talked the cagebelles out of surrendering their interests to the Olympic body's Southeast Asian Games Task Force.

POC head scored for backing Jalasco

ATHLETICS president Go Teng Kok yesterday criticized Philippine Olympic Committee head Celso Dayrit for backing basketball leader Freddie Jalasco.

Go said Dayrit has been too accommodating to Jalasco even after the BAP national board, followed by players and coaches of the Philippine men's and women's teams, had repudiated the former BAP president, and extending their support to Quintellano "Tiny" Literal who has been running the day-to-day affairs of the association since Jalasco's ouster.

The reactions of the athletics head came amid the POC's recent announcement that it is recognizing Jalasco as BAP head.

Go questioned Dayrit's continued "love affair" with Jalasco despite the overwhelming clamor for the POC to recognize Literal, whose BAP faction composed of legitimate officers nationwide has been looking after the training of the national teams from Day One of the leadership crisis.

"It is apparent that Jalasco does not have the support of BAP peers as shown by his ouster," Go said. "Now, players and coaches, as well as the referees, have pledged total support to Literal. Such overwhelming mandate should not be ignored by Dayrit."

Go also hit Jalasco's penchant of replacing those who are against his leadership.

"Dayrit has a lot of explaining to do for harboring Jalasco despite overwhelming support for Literal," added Go.

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Bare Eye: Secrets behind Filipino boxing defeats
A27

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

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BULLET PIERCES HEART

Las Piñas mayor's organizer shot dead

By Alcuin Papa

A BULLET through the heart yesterday killed a nephew and political organizer of Las Piñas City Mayor Vergel "Nene" Aguilar, police said.

An enraged mob caught one of the suspected gunmen and beat him and then shot him to death, Las Piñas police said.

The victim was Albert Aguilar, 34, who was also the president of the Las Piñas City chapter of the Association of Barangay Councils.

Investigators believed politics was behind the killing.

Aguilar was a staunch supporter of Mayor Aguilar, congressional candidate Cynthia Villar, her husband senatorial candidate Manny Villar.

Cynthia Villar is the mayor's sister.

Hired gunmen lay in wait for Aguilar, who had just come from a meeting with other community leaders at the CAA Barangay Hall on Saging Street, CAA, Las Piñas at about 1:30 p.m., police said.

As Aguilar boarded his Honda City (UTJ-303), three men approached him, pulled out .45 caliber pistols and shot Aguilar point blank, police said.

Aguilar, a resident of BF Homes International Las Piñas, died on the way to the Perpetual Help Medical Center also in Las Piñas, police said.

But before the gunmen could board their motorcycle, a mob had gathered and began to chase them.

They caught one of the suspects, identified as Liberato Delfin of Barangay Purol 2, Dasmariñas, Cavite, and beat him up, police said.

Witnesses said a member of the mob, said to be a police officer, shot and killed Delfin.

Police said the other two suspects were able to escape. Witnesses said one of the suspects looked like a lesbian.

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We're so angry, say kin, friends of slain student

By Alcuin Papa
and Michael Lim Ubac

"HER family and friends are so angry. We want justice for her. This is for society as a whole so crimes like this don't happen again."

Lita Feliciano, 51, yesterday made this call on behalf of family and friends just before the burial of her daughter Claudine Mabelle Feliciano, 21, who was found dead, and raped, in a creek in Barangay San Antonio, Parañaque last weekend.

Claudine was buried yesterday afternoon at the Manila Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque.

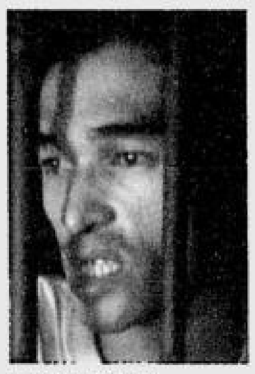
She was brought to her final resting place even as the National Bureau of Investigation said it is now fully convinced that just one group of young men from well-off families was behind Claudine's abduction, rape and killing as well as the attempted abduction of another woman within less than 12 hours.

Lawyer Edmund Arugay, chief of the NBI Special Action Unit (SAU), said his men believed that the young men who abducted, raped and killed Claudine were the same ones who also tried

WE'RE SO ANGRY/ A26

Police nab suspect in PTV-4 man's slay

By Philip C. Tubeza



ESGUERRA

MEMBERS of the Central Police District (CPD) on Wednesday night arrested a jobless man suspected to be one of two men who robbed and killed cameraman-driver Tomas Edora, 41, of the government–owned PTV-4 television station on Tuesday night.

The CPD mobile unit arrested Eduardo Esguerra, of Barangay Piñahan, Quezon City, near the Parks and Wildlife sanctuary on North Avenue in Quezon City at about 10 p.m. Wednesday, said Senior Insp. Rudy Jaraza, chief of the CPD-Criminal Investigation-Homicide Unit.

POLICE/ A26

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We're so angry . . .

(From page A25)

to snatch Janet Balis, 25, less than 12 hours later.

When Claudine was found Sunday morning in the San Antonio creek, she was naked, her hands were tied with a piece of cloth, and there were strangulation marks on her neck and bruises all over her body.

Laboratory results said she was also raped by at least two men.

"Initial evidence gathered by my men showed that the black Mazda 323 (URN-855) was used in both incidents, which happened in less than 12 hours," Arugay said.

Feliciano was driving the Mazda when she was abducted at about 11:30 p.m. Saturday as she was leaving Ayala Alabang.

Arugay said it appeared that the incident occurred after Claudine took her friend Katrina Dacanay home. After calling her father Rolando at about 11 p.m. to tell him she was driving her friend home, nothing was heard from Claudine again, Arugay said.

Feliciano's Mazda was spotted at about 3 a.m. Sunday on Imelda Avenue, also in Parañaque, he said.

He said that this time, the young men, using Feliciano's car, tried to kidnap Balis while she was waiting for a ride near the Multinational Village on Imelda Avenue.

But Balis was able to shout for help, which attracted the attention of roving barangay watchmen.

Balis described the men as good-looking with ages that range from 25 to 30.

Arugay said that if Claudine was abducted 10 minutes after she took Dacanay home, "it means that the incident occurred right inside Ayala Alabang. The young men could have been residents of Camella or nearby villages."

Arugay noted that only residents have access to the subdivisions or their private roads.

Arugay also suspected that the suspects were high on drugs or drunk when they carried out the crimes. "Some of the men threw up inside the car possibly due to too much alcohol intake," he said.

"She was very sweet and kind," Mrs. Feliciano said of her daughter yesterday. "She was independent, hard working and had a strong personality. But she did not have any enemies. In fact, she detested conflict."

Claudine, who graduated from the De La Salle University with a degree in human resources management, had a lot of friends who crowded the funeral parlor even before her casket arrived. The parlor had been filled with her friends since the first night, her mother said.

Family friend Del Gelacio said of Claudine, "She was friendly and thoughtful and a very nice girl. She was like a daughter to me and we have no idea who would do such a thing to her."

Mrs. Feliciano and Gelacio said Claudine had a number of suitors. "But they were all good boys," the mother said.

Claudine was the youngest of Lita and Rolando Feliciano's three daughters. Rolando, 54, runs a brokerage firm.

Police nab suspect . . .

(From page A25)

Police said Esguerra is one of the two men who allegedly robbed and stabbed Edora while the PTV-4 employee was waiting for a ride in front of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) building on Elliptical Road in Quezon City.

The two men took turns in stabbing Edora 11 times, police said.

"We were able to identify Esguerra because he robbed another victim an hour before he killed the cameraman," said Jaraza.

He said that the other victim, whom he did not identify, reported the robbery to police.

Esguerra is allegedly a notorious robber who preys on people around the Quezon Memorial Circle.

But a source told the INQUIRER the police were having a hard time pinning Edora's death on Esguerra.

The source said police were still looking for a witness who actually saw Esguerra rob and kill Edora.

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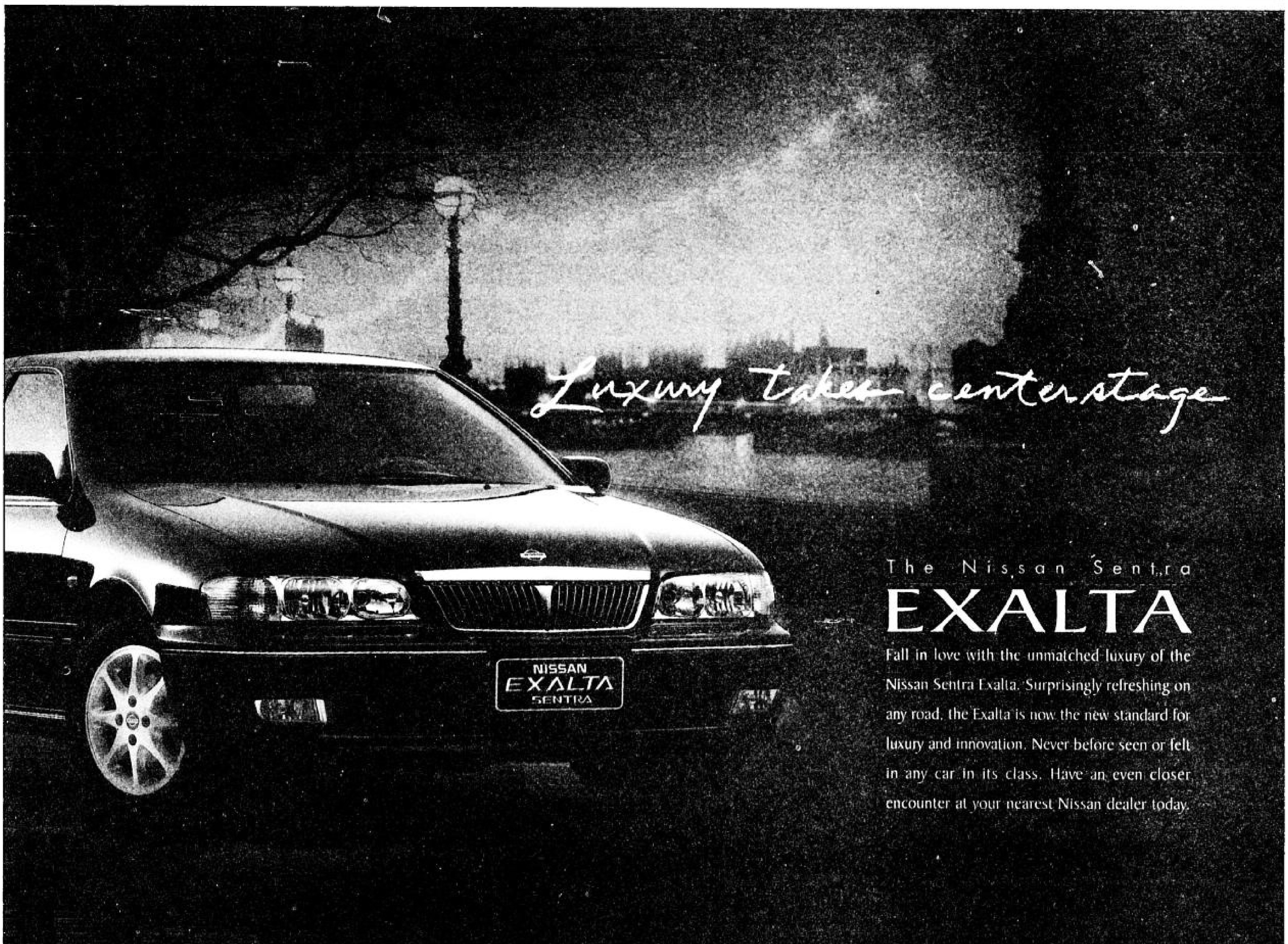

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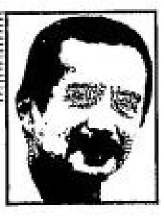
Secrets behind Filipino boxing defeats

BARE EYE



Recah Trinidad

MY friend Ding Marcelo was stunned when he was told the supposed secret of why Filipino world boxing champions lose their crowns whenever they make a title defense in Thailand or South Korea.

The Koreans make things very, very hard for Filipino fighters while the Thais tend to kill our champs with kindness.

The unsolicited input came courtesy of Cebu-based sportsman Tony Aldeguer, whom Marcelo, Manila Bulletin sports editor, had the luck of meeting during the recent PAL Interclub golfest.

It was a first-ever meeting between the two gentlemen and Marcelo swore he felt greatly rewarded after the chance acquaintance.

The prizefighting input he got was indeed very vital, but Ding said he had never thought Mr. Aldeguer was such a great, kind-hearted fellow.

* * *

The selfless concern of Tony Aldeguer for aspiring boxers is legend over there in Cebu.

I had seen how he would take in many homeless aspirants, give them quarters, hone them on the basics of the sport, then guide them to the big-time scene, without asking anything in return.

I first saw Malcolm Tuñacao, skinny and stylish, in Aldeguer's gym four years ago. He was on what we may call a special boxing scholarship, courtesy of Tony Aldeguer.

I was greatly impressed by the frail but talented aspirant. It could be pure gut feel. But before I left the gym, I whispered to Tuñacao that he would one day become a world champ.

I was there when Tuñacao made it as WBC flyweight champ in Udon Thani, Thailand last May. I was also at ringside when he suffered that shocking, shameful first-round fall in Phichit, Thailand earlier this month.

* * *

I must say that Tony Aldeguer hit the nail on the head when he said that Tuñacao fell prey to the killer kindness of the hosts. As soon as they touched down in Bangkok, days before they could pitch camp in Phichit, Tuñacao was treated as main guest in several promotional feasts.

"It was a no-no. I would have not allowed that," Tuñacao's manager, Rex Wakee Salud, was overheard protesting following the dethronement of Tuñacao, who was forced to shed a total of eight pounds in four days after he ballooned to 120 pounds.

OK. At the same time, though, we must admit that Tuñacao lost also because he failed to conquer his terrible appetite. Which also sustains the time-honored tenet that, for most boxers, the battle against the weighing scales is often more excruciating than the actual ring duels themselves.

This is not to say, however, that the Thais would be content enough with giving visiting champs the regal treatment. They could also make things very tough for visiting overweight champs, as in the case of Tuñacao, who was prevented from making a trial weigh-in until the final minute.

* * *

Tony Aldeguer was likewise correct in the case of Gerry Peñalosa, who also lost his WBC super flyweight diadem in Seoul.

Peñalosa was given a dirty runaround and even lost his way to the training gym at least a couple of times.

I also saw for myself how, in his first defense of his WBC 115-pound crown, a scheduled 45-minute ride from Seoul to Songnam took nearly three hours. This happened during the weigh-in for the championship.

Anyway, when Peñalosa finally reached Songnam and discovered that he was a pound over the 115-limit, he was given a full hour to shed.

Peñalosa could've easily sweated out the extra pound. But it happened to be February, the dead of winter, and Gerry was allowed only the use of the icy car park to work out.

We found a way to smuggle Peñalosa into a van, drove him to his hotel, where we made him work out inside the bathroom after the heating systems had been turned on.

For the record, Peñalosa, after suffering a first-round knockdown, won that one in Songnam via a 10th round stoppage of his tough Korean challenger.

Peñalosa was not as lucky in his next defense when he met In Jo-choo, the wily Sokor run-run artist, who outpointed him and took Gerry's world crown. This time, the Koreans, however, made sure the international judges would favor the heartless but elusive Korean.

* * *

Well, it's easy to nod and agree with what Tony Aldeguer had noted in his mini thesis on why Filipino world champs regularly lose their crowns in neighboring Asian fight capitals.

But knowing Mr. Aldeguer, I trust he also knows there are other built-in defects behind these predictable defeats.

Filipino world champs don't only overeat. They don't only get the dirty treatment abroad.

Our champs often go out to defend their crowns groping in the dark.

Tuñacao himself had no exact idea what sort of fighter he was meeting in Pongsaklek Wonjangkam. The Thai challenger, after all, was pegged a 2-1 underdog even by his countrymen.

As a result, Tuñacao was mercilessly wrecked and run over by the Thai in the first round.

It could have been helped, but most of our world champs campaign abroad at a great disadvantage.

Unlike here in Manila, boxers in other Asian capitals, mainly South Korea, Japan and Thailand, function under the guidance of very effective boxing commissions.

These Asian boxing bodies do help in polishing techniques, while also providing scientific data, not to mention all-out support to their fighters.

They regard world champs as real treasures. They hone, help, protect and do everything to improve them.

In our case, the best the government could do is send observers, like those ones regularly fielded by the Games and Amusements Board, to world title fights involving Filipino boxers.

These gentlemen appear content with the lazy process.

Razon to Central Visayas

By Jerome Aning

WESTERN Police District director Chief Supt. Avelino Razon Jr. today formally relinquishes his post and will take over as the director of the Police Regional Office 7 in Central Visayas.

Razon will be replaced as Manila police chief by Senior Supt. Nicolas Pacinos, deputy director of the Philippine National Police's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

During his regular conference yesterday, Razon told reporters he would replace outgoing PRO7 director, Chief Supt. Tiburcio Fusillero, one of the dozen police generals and senior officials investigated for engaging in partisan politics by openly campaigning for former PNP chief and now senatorial candidate Panfilo Lacson.

Razon said his reassignment and Fusillero's relief was recommended by the PNP leadership and duly approved yesterday by the Commission on Elections. The turnover ceremony is set for 3 p.m. today.

"My transfer is in line with (PNP acting chief) Deputy Director Leandro Mendoza's directive that all police officers must remain apolitical at all times," Razon said. Other police generals involved in politicking are also expected to be replaced.

The Comelec was asked to choose between Pacinos and the WPD deputy director for administration, Senior Supt. Marcelino Franco Jr., whom Razon and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza recommended.

Razon, Franco and Pacinos belong to the Philippine Military Academy's Class 71.

Razon is one of the first top police officials to withdraw support for former President Estrada on Jan. 19 during the Edsa People Power II that installed Vice President Macapagal as new chief executive.

Razon first served as WPD chief from 1996 to 1998. He was reappointed on Dec. 29, 1999.

ERRATUM

The University of Santo Tomas faculty of civil law published an advertisement yesterday on page 3 of the main section of the INQUIRER announcing the opening of its 2001 pre-bar review classes. Inadvertently, however, the name of the university printed at the top of the ad was that of the University of the Philippines.

The INQUIRER apologizes to these two reputable universities for the error.

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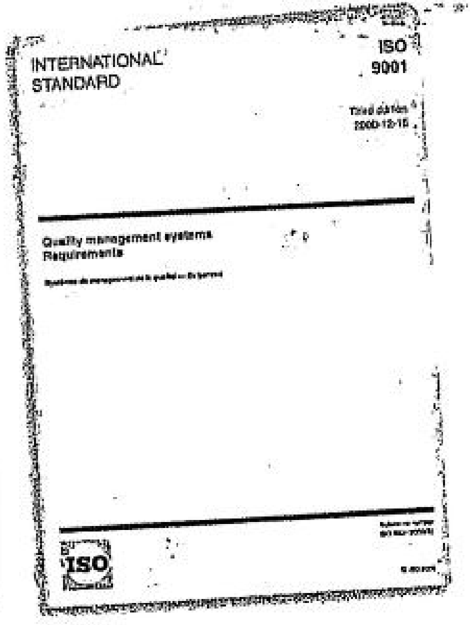

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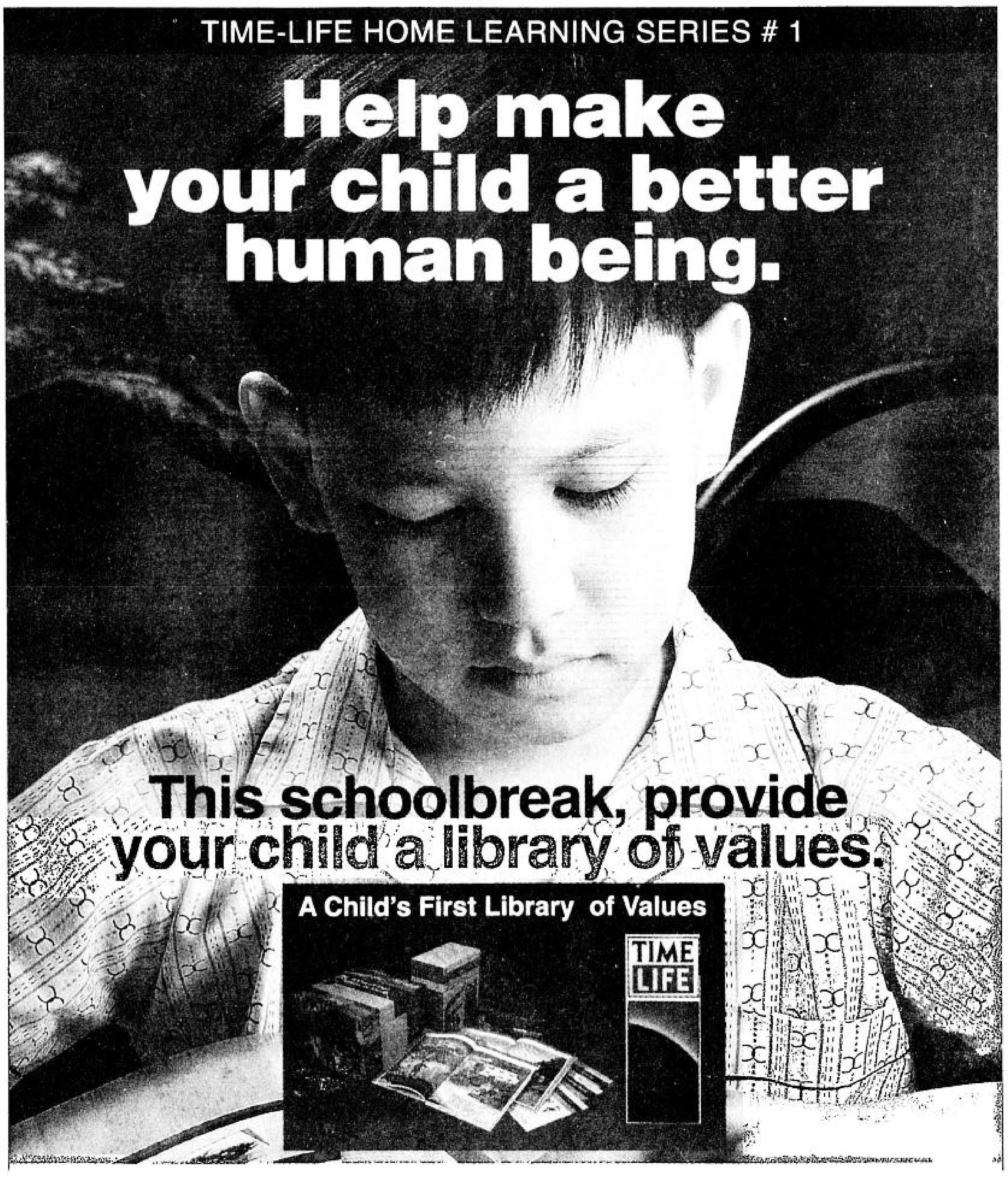
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Billy loves ballet

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SEEN in preview last Saturday, "Billy Elliot" was delightful and involving movie about a miner's son who, against all expectations, develops a love not for boxing, but for ballet—and yet, he's no sissy.

That's the film's audacious point: it seeks to transform ballet dancing for men from an effete art to a powerful and dynamic activity, as it should be.

But this is not the movie's sole objective. It also shows how a father-son relationship can progress from awkward macho posturings to a genuine love that makes it possible for a tough miner who's lived his whole life out in the boondocks to finally understand why his son wants more than anything else in the world to dance the ballet—and even to go out of his way to support him in achieving his dream.

The film is also about how a stranger, in this case the young boy's dance teacher (**Julie Walters**) is able to transform her student's life, with no material recompense for her prodigious effort.

All these compelling themes come together and are brought vividly to life in "Billy Elliot." True, some of the movie's scenes are a bit overlong and tendentious, but most of the film works well, and its major points come through with clarity and passion.

Despite his tender years, young pre-teen actor **Jamie Bell** paces the movie with his wonderfully natural and focused performance.

It helps a lot that he doesn't look "artistic," and that he isn't as handsome as, say, the young **Mark Lester** in "Oliver!"

Bell's less than terrific looks work in his portrayal's favor, making the title character look so "ordinary" that the story of his transformation becomes acutely believable, empathetic and moving.

More, it can inspire other seemingly "ordinary" young people out there to pursue their own dreams, despite all the obstacles thrown their way.

Just about the really disappointing aspect of the movie is its ending. The whole film has been building up to Billy's eventual apotheosis as a premier danseur in London but, at that climactic moment (the Prince's en-

BILLY/A29

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6 GOLD (SDDS) BILLY ELLIOT
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9 OOPS, TEKA LANG
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4
5
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8 (SDDS) WEDDING PLANNER
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4 LIVE SHOW

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2 OOPS, TEKA LANG
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6 LIVE SHOW

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3 (DOLBY) MS CONGENIALITY
4 DRACULA 2000

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MAXIM	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
MIRAMAR	KANGKONG/VIVID
ODEON	OOPS TEKA LANG
ODEON-2	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
ROBEN	TOROTOT
TANDEM-1	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
TANDEM-2	IKA-7 GLORYA
TIMES	HIGHLANDER / LOST SOUL
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	ANAK NG YAKUSA
ACT-2	ANAK NG KANO
ACT-3	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
ACT-4	TURN ON
CORONET-2	OOPS TEKA LANG
QUEZON-1	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
REMAR	OOPS TEKA LANG
REMAR-2	TOROTOT
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	LIVE SHOW
OCEAN CINEMA-A	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
OCEAN CINEMA-B	BLONDIE
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	WEDDING PLANNER
CINEMA-2	DRACULA 2000
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	HOSTAGE
CINEMA-2	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
CINEMA-3	LIVE SHOW
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	CAST AWAY
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	OBJECT OF OBSESSION
CINEMA-6	TUSONG TWOSOME
CINEMA-7	BLONDIE
CINEMA-8	TUHOG
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	HANNIBAL
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MS. CONGENIALITY
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	ALMOST FAMOUS
CINEMA-12	DRACULA 2000
CINEMA-14	HOSTAGE
CINEMA-15	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
LORES	
CINEMA-2	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
CINEMA-3	BLONDIE
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	BILLY ELLIOT
CINEMA-2	MS. CONGENIALITY
CINEMA-3	WEDDING PLANNER
CINEMA-4	PAY IT FORWARD
CINEMA-5	HANNIBAL
CINEMA-6	WEDDING PLANNER

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SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

SHE is not allowed to show her political leanings or campaign for any candidate, but **Kris Aquino** will feature stars running in the May elections in her new daily news-magazine on ABS-CBN, "Balitang Kris. Yes, including her erstwhile live-in partner, **Phillip Salvador**, who is running for vice mayor of Mandaluyong.

"I hope to interview Phillip about his candidacy and that will make our son (**Joshua**) very happy," Kris says. "We haven't been on speaking terms for five months. I've hurt Phillip and he has hurt me. But whatever misunderstanding we had in the past, I am willing to let that go."

Kris also believes she can bring together the fierce opponents in the election for a square-off in her show.

"I'm sure *Tita* **Midz (Siguion-Reyna)** and **Teddy Boy Locsin** will agree to guest in my show. I also want to bring **Edu (Manzano)** and **Jojo Binay** together, or **Rudy (Fernandez)** and *Tito* **Sonny Belmonte**, who are both my friends."

"Balitang Kris" is keeping Kris busier than when she was doing her daily morning show, "Today With Kris." Instead of not having to wake up early and enjoying late mornings at home, the popular TV host is putting in more hours of work for her new program.

"It's definitely more work for me and I'm working 12- to 14-hour days," Kris says. "One episode takes a minimum of two days, so that's harder for me compared to doing 'Today With Kris' live in the studio.

"But I'm always excited to start the day. I'm so energized and I feel I can do a lot of things. I look forward to each day of work on my new program."

She misses her daily morning show's live audience, but she says she gets a different kind of satisfaction in her news-magazine program, which replaced Korina Sanchez's "Balitang K," Mondays to Fridays, 5:30 to 6 p.m.

"For one, I'm less pre-occupied now with my lack of love life," Kris says. "I'm more single-minded about my career now. My new show allows my personality to shine."

Kris is not restricted to doing Metro Manila coverages, and vows to go around the country.

"Just as long as they won't make me swim, I'm fine," she says. "I am willing to do anything for the show."

For starters, she plans to go to Bicol and interview superstar **Nora Aunor**, who is running for governor of Camarines Sur.

"No one has interviewed Nora using the Mayon volcano as backdrop and I want to be the first one to do that," she says.

"I also asked Gov. **Chavit Singson** if I can visit Ilocos Sur and he's more than willing to welcome me. I've never been to the solid north and an Aquino has never set foot in Ilocos. I will attempt to do that."

Twice a week, Kris will do remote interviews "a la 'Larry King Live,'" through the ABS-CBN microwave link-up.

"Balitang Kris" is the first co-production venture of the news and entertainment division of ABS-CBN, and the only show in the division which carries the name of its host.

"We are combining the gloss of entertainment and the substance of news in this show," explains Kris' manager, **Deo Endrinal**. "It's definitely more entertaining than 'Balitang K.'"

Kris vows to be more serious in her new program, which will tackle more in-depth topics.

"I'm growing up and, hopefully, the show will grow up with me," says Kris. "It will be a fun mix of politics, cultural issues and everyday news."

On her first week, she even acted as talent coordinator and invited the guests for interviews, including her brother, Tarlac Rep. **Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino**, who was featured in the pilot episode about presidential children.

"That also paved the way for my reconciliation with Noynoy, although it was my mom who told him to appear as a guest in my show," Kris says.

"I called up **Mikey (Arroyo)** and he said yes right away. I called up **JV (Ejercito)** eight times, but he turned me down. He said he was advised by his dad against granting interviews on national TV. But I told him that I want to be able to do his first victory interview when he wins in San Juan."

The episode on superstar wives taking a backseat to the political careers of their husbands was also Kris' idea. It featured **Vilma Santos** and **Sharon Cuneta**.

Kris continues to be in "The Buzz," which she hosts with **Boy Abunda** on Sundays.

"I don't want to leave Boy, not in the immediate future," Kris says. "Besides, I have an existing contract for 'The Buzz.' But it's very hard to establish your credibility as a news person if they see you intriguing people every Sunday.

"I want to be able to follow the likes of **Barbara Walters** or **Katie Couric**. With the kind of work I am putting into the show, I would like to give the audience the authority they are looking for.

"I want to mature as a broadcaster and get more respect in that field. I want to get more awards like what I got during the Star Awards for TV last year."

Will her news-magazine program lead to a political career?

"Politics is destiny. "If I'm destined to be a politician, I believe it will happen. But first, I want to be able to fulfill my promise to my mom to get a law degree. If I accomplish that, maybe that's the time I will decide. I want to get elected not because of my name or popularity, but because I'm capable of doing the job."

Clarification

NICANOR Tiongson, the newly appointed chair of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board, clarifies the issue raised in this column on March 7 about the uncut version of "Live Show."

I wrote that the scheduled Valentine's Day play date of the film was postponed because the MTRCB pointed out some objectionable scenes in the film, pending its classification.

In a letter faxed to INQUIRER, Tiongson said "Live Show" was approved by the previous board under then-chair **Armida Siguion-Reyna** on May 12, 2000.

"Once the MTRCB issues a permit to exhibit the film, it absolutely has no power to control the scheduling of the film's public exhibition, since this is entirely the prerogative of the producer," Tiongson explained.

Regal Entertainment's resident director said "Live Show" made a hefty box office bonanza on its opening day.

Congratulations to director **Joey Reyes**, who dared to dramatize a taboo theme which no other filmmaker has done before.

AQUINO. Works harder on her new show, "Balitang Kris"

Billy loves ballet

(From page A28)

trance in "Swan Lake"), all we get is a prodigious leap by the grown-up Billy, and then the shot is frozen.

The movie would have really become an inspiring and cathartic viewing experience if the climactic moment were extended for a couple of minutes of great ballet dancing, so viewers' sense of fulfillment could have been given a chance to "bloom" into overwhelming joy.

But the movie is viewable the way it is. Bell's supremely natural performance is completely winning, and Walters as his ballet teacher and the actor who plays his father also come up with memorable portrayals.

Final notes: this movie has been rated R (for adults only) in the States because of its cuss words, but after viewing the film, we don't believe that its profanity is all that off-putting, so we hope that the movie gets a not so severe classification for its Philippine run.

It would be great if viewers in their mid-teens would be allowed to see the movie, so that it can inspire them to be as determined as Billy Elliot is in fighting to achieve their own dreams.

Finally, we're happy about this movie's natural approach to its artistic subject matter because it brings art down from its alienatingly high pedestal, and makes it come to bear on the here and now, as it should.

With more movies like this, art can take its rightful place as a part of our lives, instead of the chic and too-exclusive diversion or pretension it so often is these days.

New episodes

THIS MONTH, Star World presents all-new seasons of the top-rated comedy shows, Friends" and "Whose Line Is It Anyway?"

"Friends" starts its new season at 8 p.m. on March 22, airing every Thursday, with replays on Fridays at midnight.

And check out the best impromptu comics on "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" beginning on March 22 at 8:30 p.m. The improvisational comedy showcase airs every Thursday, with replays on Saturdays at 12:30 a.m. The show is hosted by Drew Carey.

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PAY IT FORWARD - P 13 11:40, 2:15, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50	HANNIBAL - R 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00	WEDDING PLANNER - P 13 12:20, 2:30, 4:40, 6:50, 9:00, 11:00

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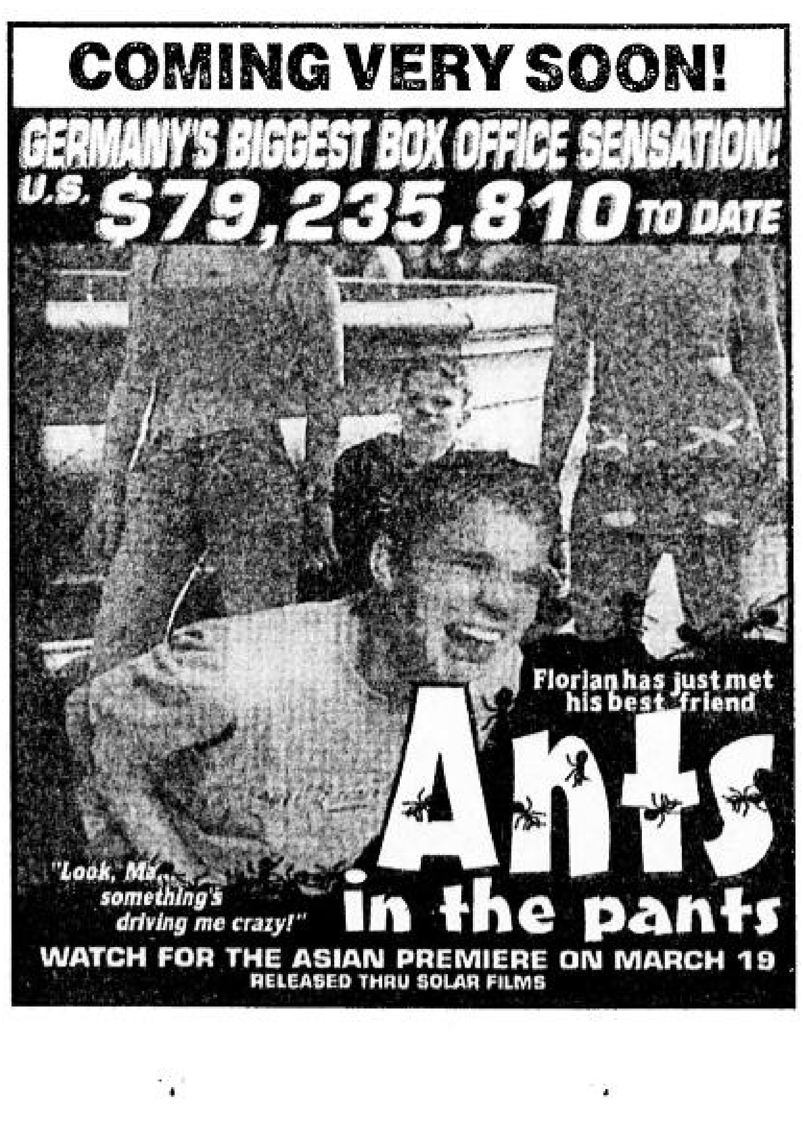

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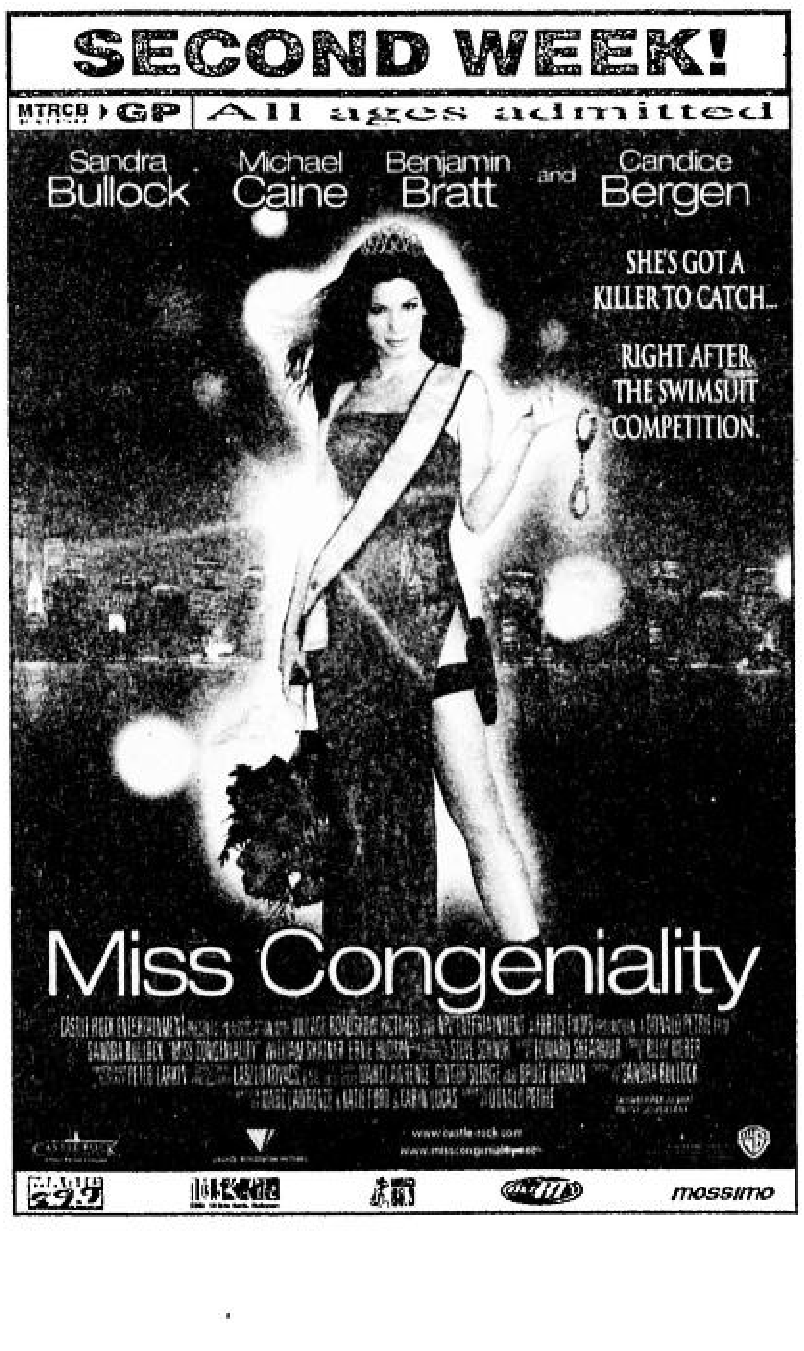

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Zsa Zsa gets nasty treatment from Legenda Hotel

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

IF you think that celebrities normally get better and preferential treatment than ordinary people, think again. **Zsa Zsa Padilla** had an awful experience at the Legenda Hotel in Subic Bay on March 3 and 4.

The whole cast of Zsa Zsa's Sunday noontime program "ASAP" was in Subic to pre-tape segments on Saturday, March 3, and they were airing live from Subic on March 4. Zsa Zsa had a complimentary room sponsored by the hotel, but she had made a reservation for the presidential suite at Legenda earlier that week through the staff of ASAP.

She checked in together with her two daughters, **Nicole** and **Zia**, on the early afternoon of March 3. The two-bedroom presidential suite was going to cost her $400 for an overnight stay. She decided to splurge on the room because *Tito* **Dolphy** was set to arrive later in the day and she wanted him to be comfortable. He would be making the long car trip to Subic, despite the fact that his "Home Along da Riles" taping had ended early on March 3.

Management did accept her booking, and upon check-in they did swipe her credit card as a guarantee for the payment of the room and whatever room service or other expenses they might incur during their stay.

Around 5:30 p.m. on March 3, Zsa Zsa received a call from the front desk saying the presidential suite would lose its electricity and there would be no hot water. She found it a bit incredulous that although there were other suites on that same floor, the presidential suite would be the only one affected by the power outage and the lack of hot water.

They offered to show Zsa Zsa some of the smaller suites that she could occupy in lieu of the presidential suite.

This is where the story takes a nasty turn. Feeling they had no choice in the matter and before Tito Dolphy arrived from Manila, Zsa Zsa left the two girls with their *yaya* in the presidential suite and was inspecting the other rooms. Suddenly the hotel turned off the lights in the rooms where her daughters, 10 and 9 years old, were staying, giving the girls a nasty fright.

By the time Zsa Zsa got back to them they were crying and shaking from fright because they felt trapped in the darkness, and in an unfamiliar place at that.

The family moved into the smaller suite, at the farthest end of the hotel. Because Zsa Zsa had a weird feeling about what had occurred, at 8 a.m. on March 4, she decided to call up the presidential suite they had vacated. Lo and behold, a man who sounded groggy and Chinese answered the phone.

The presidential suite was numbered 8888, a very lucky number combination for gamblers. The suite was very conveniently located: Directly below was Legenda's casino.

Zsa Zsa was obviously pushed aside, regardless of her paid-up reservation, to make way for a high-roller.

The hotel handled the situation badly because they chose to deal with it in a dishonest manner. Zsa Zsa regularly goes to Las Vegas because her parents now reside there, and she is aware of the fact that high-rollers are given special courtesies and are often accorded complimentary rooms because of the huge amounts they spend at the casino.

Zsa Zsa said that if management had just been honest with her, and admitted that it had to please a regular client who wanted the presidential suite for two nights and would she kindly give way, she wouldn't have been difficult to deal with.

I experienced something similar, but it was handled with so much more aplomb, at The Grand Hyatt in San Francisco. We were booked in a room that was one of the few connected to a larger suite.

A family of four wanted to occupy the two connecting rooms, so Hyatt management asked us kindly if we would be willing to vacate our room. Because of the inconvenience we would be upgraded to a suite, and they were going to give us complimentary breakfast and dinner coupons as well.

If you were treated with that much courtesy, then you'd gladly cooperate, right?

Before ASAP on March 4, Zsa Zsa calmly confronted the desk manager. She was never given an apology for the dishonesty, nor did the hotel mention the inconvenience they had caused her.

The Legenda representative defended their actions by saying that the foreigner had agreed to use the presidential suite despite the fact that there wasn't going to be hot water during his stay. That's a real stretch for anybody to believe.

So you see, celebrities who are paying customers are also treated shabbily and discriminated against, on our own shores at that, just to give way to a foreigner who's ready to gamble away millions.

'Cory Quirino Show' premieres on Saturday

QUIRINO

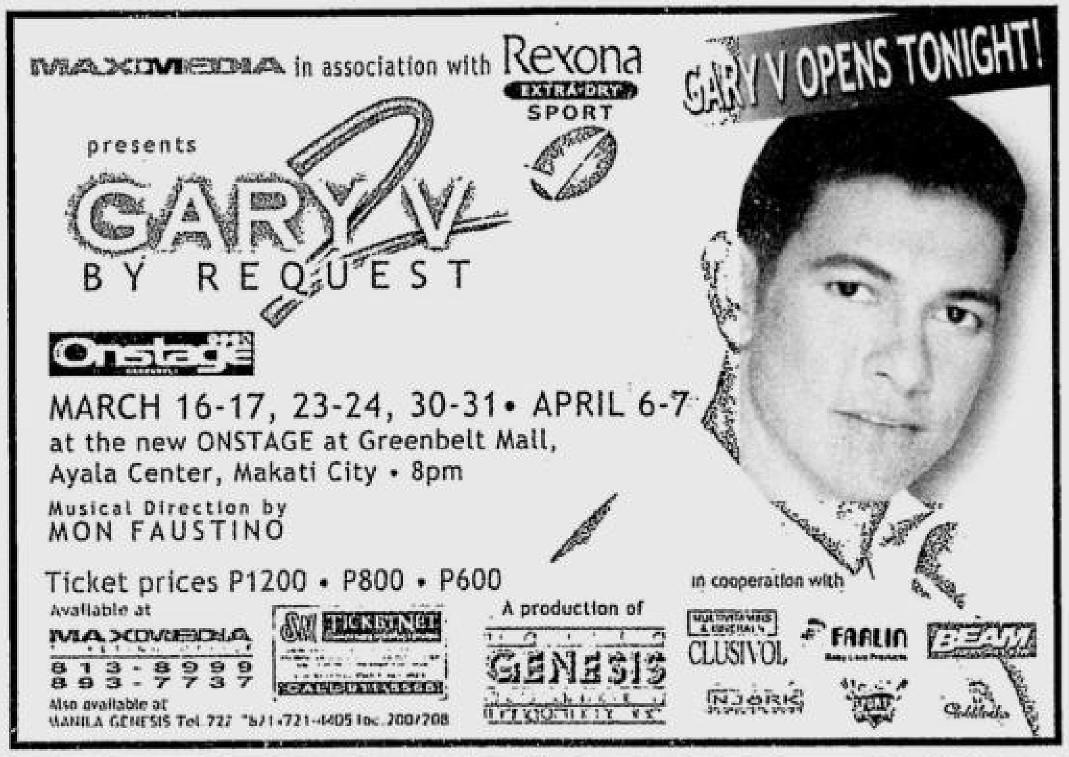
SPORTSWORLD UK recently announced it will be producing "The Cory Quirino Show," a variety telemagazine program which premieres on Saturday, March 17, 5-6 p.m., on RPN Channel 9.

Hosted by best-selling author, civic leader, wellness diva and TV personality Cory Quirino, the show will focus on people empowerment - the belief that the power to be happy, to succeed and to be fulfilled rests in the individual.

Segments of the show include celebrity interviews, cooking tips, beauty regimens, stress-busting exercises and civic spiritedness.

Mike Magpayo, chief operating officer of Sportsworld Media & Entertainment, the local office of the London-based global production conglomerate, says: "We share the belief of our UK partners in the fantastic range of Ms Quirino's appeal and in her established savvy as a broadcaster. With our creative and production resources backing her up, 'The Cory Quirino Show' will be entertaining and informative, while reaching out to all segments of the Filipino viewership.

"To us," he added, "the program will be a welcome addition to the long list of programs produced internationally by the many branches of Sportsworld."



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BUSINESS

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ CORRIE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editor

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Stocks hit 2-mo. low, break support

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

SHARE prices yesterday plunged 2.1 percent to hit their lowest level since President Macapagal-Arroyo came to power amid global retreat in equities.

The main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index shed another 32.18 points to close at 1,491.61, breaching the psychological support at 1,500 for the first time in eight weeks.

Value turnover for the day was still relatively weak at 817 million shares worth P386 million, compared to 347 million shares worth ₱266 million on Wednesday. Losers outnumbered gainers eight to one.

"The troubles in the US and most Asian markets fueled worries about the global economy. This further depressed the local market whose sentiments have already been hobbled by near term earnings and economic woes," Wise Securities research head Jose Vistan said.

Vistan said that unless the market would get a positive stimulus from abroad, the local market might continue its downward trend in the coming days. "The next major support for the Phisix is at 1,450."

"What we're seeing is basically panic selling more than anything else. Everyone is apprehensive what the consequences of the slowdown will be, not only in Japan, but in all global financial markets," said Warren Chua of Mercantile Securities Corp.

"Everyone is in liquidation mode and prices are no longer an issue. People just want to get out at the moment because of the compelling overseas reasons," Chua said.

"The people are realizing that the new administration has inherited a lot of problems, and there are also external factors like the drop in Wall Street which contaminated the whole region and worldwide sentiment," said Bobby Cruz of PNB Securities Inc.

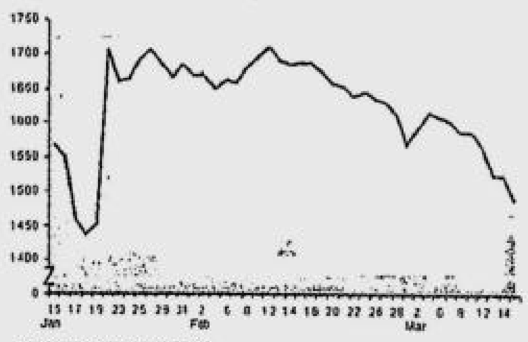
Worldsec International Securities Phils. head of research Erico Claudio said positive developments in the local front have prevented heavy sell-offs in the stock market despite the global turmoil.

But Claudio said three factors were conspiring to discourage foreign investors from buying local stocks, such as the continued worries about the US economy, the seasonal tightness of liquidity and the weakening of the peso due to the seasonal rise of imports.

The Dow Jones dropped by 3 percent to 9,973, lower the near-term support of 10,000, and the Nasdaq by 2 percent to 1,972.

STOCKS/ B2

PHISIX Jan 15-Mar 15



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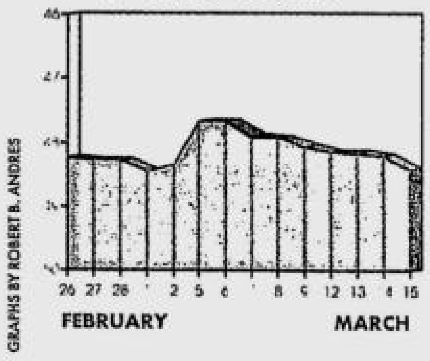

GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

₱48.43 = $1

As of 5 p.m.,
March 15, 2001

¥120.62 = $1

The US dollar was trading at 120.62 as of 5 p.m., March 15, 2001

GOLD:$262.20/262.70

per ounce Hong Kong,
March 15, 2001

BSP rates unchanged

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday left key benchmark interest rates unchanged after its weekly policy-making Monetary Board meeting.

The move was widely expected with BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura saying earlier the board was likely to keep its rates at current levels until the US Federal Reserve's policy meeting on March 20.

Local money market traders have said they expected the Fed to cut its key rates by up to 50 basis points at that meeting and the BSP to follow suit.

The country's overnight borrowing rate is now at 10.5 percent and the lending rate at 12.75 percent.

The bank has cut its key rates by 450 basis points since December after raising them by 400 basis points in October to defend the peso, which had plunged because of the country's political crisis.

Buenaventura has said more cuts are likely but only after the United States signals its interest rates policy direction. *Reuters*

Mañalac's replacement

THE MANAGEMENT committee of ailing Victorias Milling Co. has asked the Securities and Exchange Commission for authority to appoint the replacement in the committee of erstwhile VMC president and chief executive Manuel Mañalac.

The VMC mancom, composed largely of clean creditors of VMC, also proposed to the SEC the appointment of economist and University of Asia and the Pacific president Bernardo Villegas as Mañalac's replacement.

Mañalac resigned as VMC director and chief executive and as a member of the VMC mancom effective Jan. 31 this year.

VMC's management committee last year appointed Arthur Aguilar, former general manager of National Development Corp., to assume the post of COO of the sugar milling company.

ETPI, Pacific ink deal

EASTERN Telecommunications Philippines Inc. and Pacific Internet have signed an agreement that would pave the way for improving the connection of Pacific Internet subscribers to the Internet.

Joevel E. Rivera, ETPI vice president and head of its Internet business unit, said in a statement that ETPI's Manila Internet Exchange would provide the connection facility.

With the Manila IX, Internet service providers such as Pacific Internet would be able to forge arrangements with other ISPs to improve connectivity and provide faster connection.

"The Manila IX is a high-speed, scalable, reliable, neutral Internet connection point," Rivera said.

ETPI is one of the country's leading international gateway facility operators and data service providers. It also operates a fixed line business in Manila, Caloocan and Navotas.

Pacific Internet has been voted the best ISP in Asia-Pacific by Telecom Asia in 1999 and 2000 and was also voted best ISP in Singapore from 1997 to 1999.

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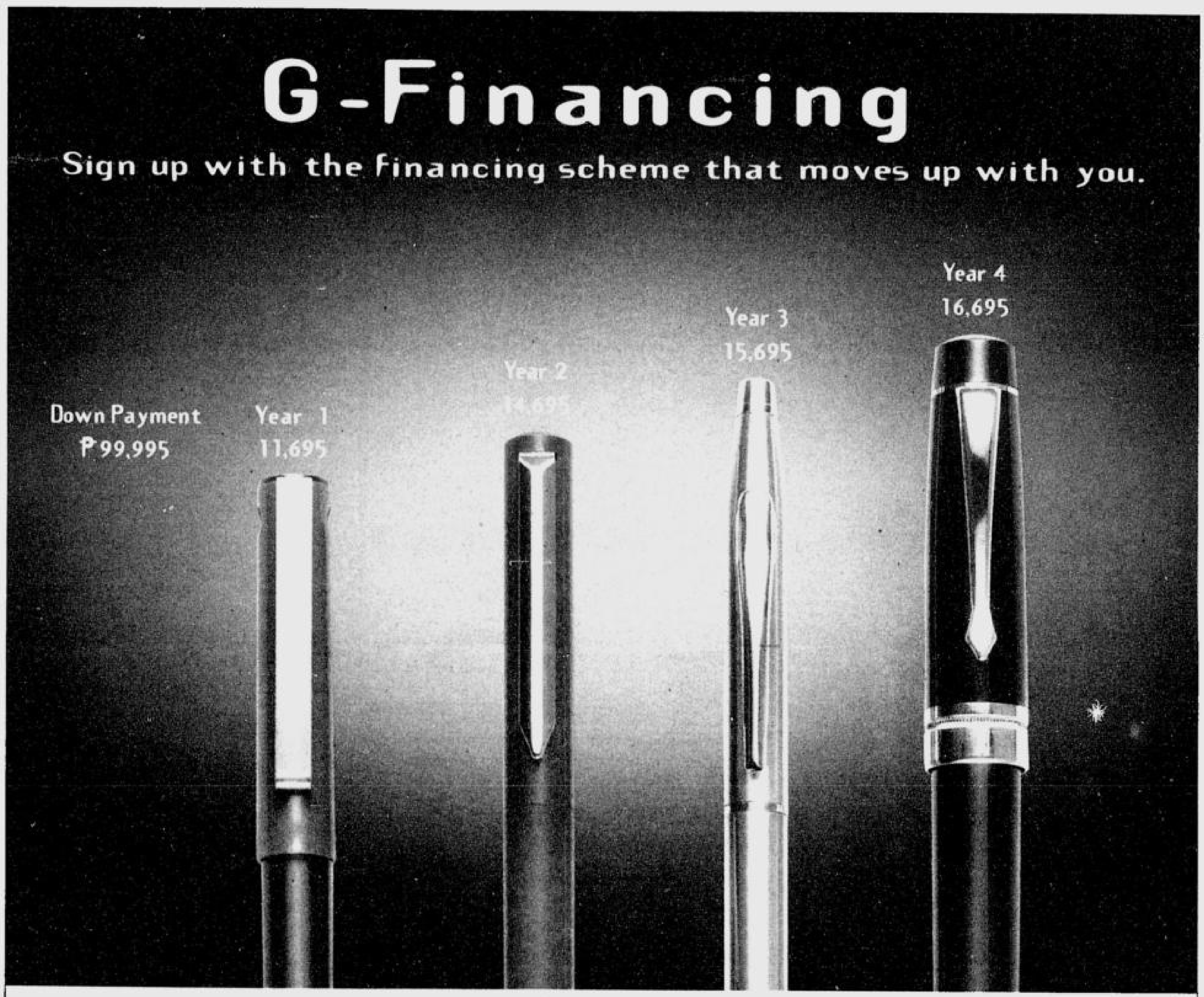

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Stocks hit 2-mo. low, break support

(From page B1)

In the Philippines, the most heavily sold down stocks in the market yesterday were blue chips Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Manila Electric Co. PLDT fell P15 to P760 while Meralco lost P2 to P48, with "B" shares down P4.50 to P54.50. *With a report from AFP*

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When employees run for public office

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez

WHAT should be the policy of employers regarding their employees' desire to vote and be voted on in the forthcoming national elections and other political exercises for that matter?

Should employers tolerate employees who run for public office, engage in partisan campaigns and take a very visible and active stance in various political exercises like referenda, constitutional changes and impeachment proceedings? Or, should business owners prohibit their personnel from taking partisan positions in elections and other political exercises?

Those who believe that employers should allow their employees to engage in partisan politics anchor their view on the constitutional rights of their workers to vote and be voted on.

This school of thought upholds the rights of citizens over the workers' duties to their employer firms. It is the opinion of these businessmen that they have no right to prevent their workers from exercising their constitutional and statutory rights.

On the other hand, some employers espouse the view that employees are duty bound to perform their duties and responsibilities when they join a company.

Citizens are not supposed to be told how to exercise their right to vote. But they certainly should remain faithful to their duties as employees. And if the workers can not remain true to the firm because of overriding commitment to public duty, then they should resign from their job.

Conflict of interest

If a conflict should arise between one's duties to the company and his rights as citizens, how would that question be resolved? What is more important—the demands for time, attention and focus on one's job or the call to public service.

For instance, should he go to a session in the municipal council or provincial board where he is an elected member or attend to an urgent and critical function in the company?

Suppose the company where he is employed has a pending tax case or an unresolved issue pertaining to city planning and zoning regulations, will there be a conflict of interest if the employee sits as a councilor or board member? Which interest would that employee uphold? Would he fight for the passage of an ordinance that would avoid onerous taxation on his employer-firm? Or would he fight for higher taxes to benefit his constituents?

How to minimize conflict?

Since conflict of interest is inevitable, it is imperative that management should be proactive enough and focused on minimizing the conflict. To do this, the company should formulate a policy that shall address this matter properly.

The policy should provide, among others, the following general statements: "The company recognizes the political rights of employees to vote and be voted in elections for public office, as well as their right to participate in political exercises, without jeopardizing, however, their duties and responsibilities as employees."

This general statement should be followed by a declaration that: "In the exercise of these political rights, the Company expects its employees to make sure that they should avoid any conflict of interest.

In case a conflict should arise, they should endeavor to minimize the negative impact by making a critical choice between resigning from his public post or giving up his job or severing his legal relationship with his employer."

Policy and guidelines

In the implementing guidelines, the policy should stress that employees have to render full time work. They have to take a leave of absence during the campaign period and if they win, they should file for leave during days of sessions and other official functions.

In cases, however, of certain positions requiring full time attention like those of municipal and city mayors, vice mayors, provincial governors and vice governors, the employees should resign from their private employment upon their assumption of public office.

Having clear company policies and guidelines will minimize conflict, as these should clarify management expectations. Without a written norm, the company can not easily enforce compliance. It is thus beneficial to both employers and employees to have a clear point of reference.

Law and jurisprudence

In the case of Manila Broadcasting Co. vs. NLRC (GR 121975, 20 Aug. 1998), the high court cited the provision of the Local Government Code which said: "Sanggunian members may practice their profession, engage in any occupation or teach in schools except during session hours."

The court noted, however, that such a law "is merely permissive and does not preclude the adoption of a contrary rule, such as that in question. The company policy is reasonable and not contrary to law."

The policy in question provides that a radio announcer who files a certificate of candidacy is considered resigned from his job in the radio station.

The broadcast company said: "In the event an employee wins . . . he cannot fully serve . . . the interest of his employer . . . ." "In the event the employee loses . . the impartiality and cold neutrality of an employee as broadcast personality is suspect . . . ."

We thus strongly recommend that HR managers come up with a written policy on this issue to avoid any wrong expectation.

Today, more than two months prior to the May national elections, there is still ample time to formulate this policy, consult the union and cascade it down to all employees.

We should always remember that a step of prevention is worth more than a long and protracted litigation. *[(For comments, you can reach the writer at the following e-mail address: josephus.jimenez@pcppi.com.ph)]*

NTC extends licenses to 3 years

BY ANTHONY O. ALCANTARA

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission has extended the effectivity of licenses to provide telecommunications services to three years.

NTC Deputy Commissioner Armi Jane Borje said yesterday the NTC commissioners decided to extend the duration of provisional authorities to operate telecommunications facilities from 12 to 18 months to cut on red tape.

Borje, however, said that the three-year licenses would cost three times as much as the annual provisional authorities issued to qualified telecommunications and broadcast companies.

The NTC would review the performance of the company once the PA expires to determine whether the license would be extended or revoked.

Trunk radio service provider Nextel Communications Philippines Inc. was one of the first companies to be issued a three-year license.

After extending the effectivity of the provisional authorities, the NTC has trained its sights on the swift interconnection of the various telecommunications facilities and the regulation of text messaging.

NTC commissioner Eliseo M. Rio Jr. said the NTC was looking at the possibility of adopting a regulatory process similar to slander as irresponsible text messaging can damage a person's reputation.

NTC plans to set up complaint centers across the country where a person who receives an abusive text message can make a report.

The NTC will then order the cellular phone company to temporarily disconnect the service of the sender of the text message if he fails to report to the NTC.

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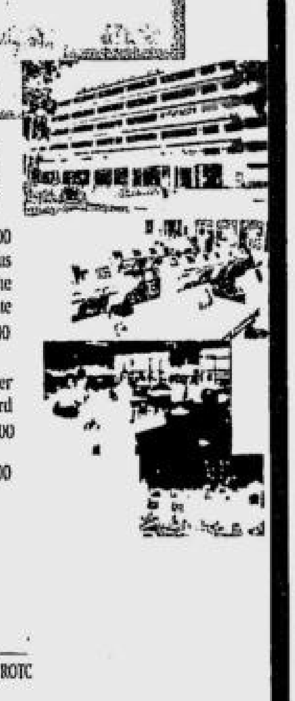

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SMB: Sarap Maging Barkada

DESPITE their patron in Malacañang having been booted out two months ago, the Erap PCGG nominees are hanging on to their directorships in San Miguel Corp.—presumably? hopefully?—just until the next stockholders' meeting on May 3.

Unlike their fellow Erap appointees in the hotly contested Cultural Center of the Philippines board who, out of decency, handed in their courtesy resignations to the new government right after Edsa II, the Erap nominees in San Miguel have not deemed it proper to follow suit.

"As you will appreciate, unless they resign there would be no vacancy in the board to which any new director may be elected," San Miguel corporate secretary Jose Feria said.

Feria was replying to a written inquiry made by Jorge Sarmiento, officer-in-charge of the Presidential Commission on Good Government.

Even better, the Erap boys have voted themselves for possible reelection and continuation of the famed San Miguel generosity, apparently without a by-your-leave from the new Malacañang tenant.

These lucky fellows are Erap brother-in-law and chair of the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation Raul de Guzman, Hermogenes Tantoco (husband of Loi Estrada's chief of staff, Justa Tantoco), movie producer Espiridion Laxa, Benjamin Paulino of PSBA and Guia Gomez friend Allan Lee.

De Guzman, if you will recall, claimed he was too ill to attend the impeachment hearings of his brother-in-law and produced medical certificates to the effect that his being put under the heat of televised scrutiny could be life-threatening to his poor self.

According to Feria, De Guzman and his fellow Erap board members were included in the list of nominees in the proxy statement approved by the San Miguel board on Feb. 1.

In other words, despite Edsa II and the Macapagal-Arroyo assumption, the Erap board members still voted themselves as Malacañang nominees for the next stockholders' meeting.

And since the list had been approved by the San Miguel board, "I have no authority to withdraw the nomination of any of the nominees," Feria said.

Running against the flow

RUNNING priest Roberto Reyes wrote to say he has not been "converted" despite having had dinner with Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura and PDIC chair Norberto Nazareno before he staged his "bank run" Monday.

In reaction to Monday's Cocktales item, the priest said:

- He agreed to meet with the two bankers in his Diliman parish rectory Friday night upon the intercession of a "third party";
- There were no nuns present in the dinner-meeting the priest hosted as had been reported although there were another priest, a lawyer and a lady present, along with Buenaventura and Nazareno;
- The "bank run" was not only in support of Urban Bank but a call to restore the integrity and credibility of the banking system;

"After that private meeting, my convictions about the bastardization of the banking system under Erap, in fact under Marcos to Erap, did not change," Reyes said.

The priest said he was still calling on President Macapagal-Arroyo to create an independent banking commission to investigate the banking system.

"If such a commission is created and pinpoints persons on either side, government and private, as culpable, then an impeachment or ouster run is in order," he said.

COCKTALES

By Victor C. Agustin

Short takes

- HONG Kong-based Asiaweek assistant managing editor Ricardo Saludo has left the magazine to become a speechwriter for President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.
- THE LABOR attaché in Hong Kong, a 60-year-old researcher appointed only a year ago on the strength of her having worked with Erap brother-in-law Raul de Guzman, is under fire from militant groups of domestic helpers based in the territory. Her alleged fault? Incompetence.
- THE JUSTICES of the Court of Appeals who ruled to reopen Orient Bank are Elroy Bello Jr. (ponente), Eugenio Labitoria and Perlita Tria Tirona.

Heard through the grapevine

FORMER Tourism Secretary Jose Antonio Gonzalez said the Mondragon House was foreclosed by Metrobank on Nov. 10, 2000, giving the previous registered owners of the Buendia Avenue building, Mondragon International and Mondragon Realty, until November, a year as required by law, to redeem the property from the bank.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Smart, Nextel agree to link networks

SMART Communications Inc. and Nextel Communications Inc. Philippines signed yesterday a memorandum of agreement that would pave the way for the interconnection of their networks and services to their respective subscribers.

The memorandum was signed by Rogelio Quevedo, head of Smart's legal department, and Emilio Festejo, president of Nextel Philippines.

With the newly signed interconnection agreement, Smart and Nextel subscribers can call up one another as soon as physical interconnection facilities are installed.

Target date for physical interconnection is within the month.

Both officials said the interconnection agreement was in support of the Macapagal administration's thrust to provide universal telecommunications access to the Filipino people.

"With the interconnection of both networks, communication among a great number of Filipinos will now be established and should make the nation better prepared to face the challenges of the new world economic order where a smooth and seamless flow of information is critical," they said in a joint statement.

Smart is the country's biggest cellular telecommunications provider with more than 3 million subscribers throughout the country.

Nextel is the country's biggest trunk radio operator using the fully digital technology called iDEN (integrated Digital Enhanced Network).

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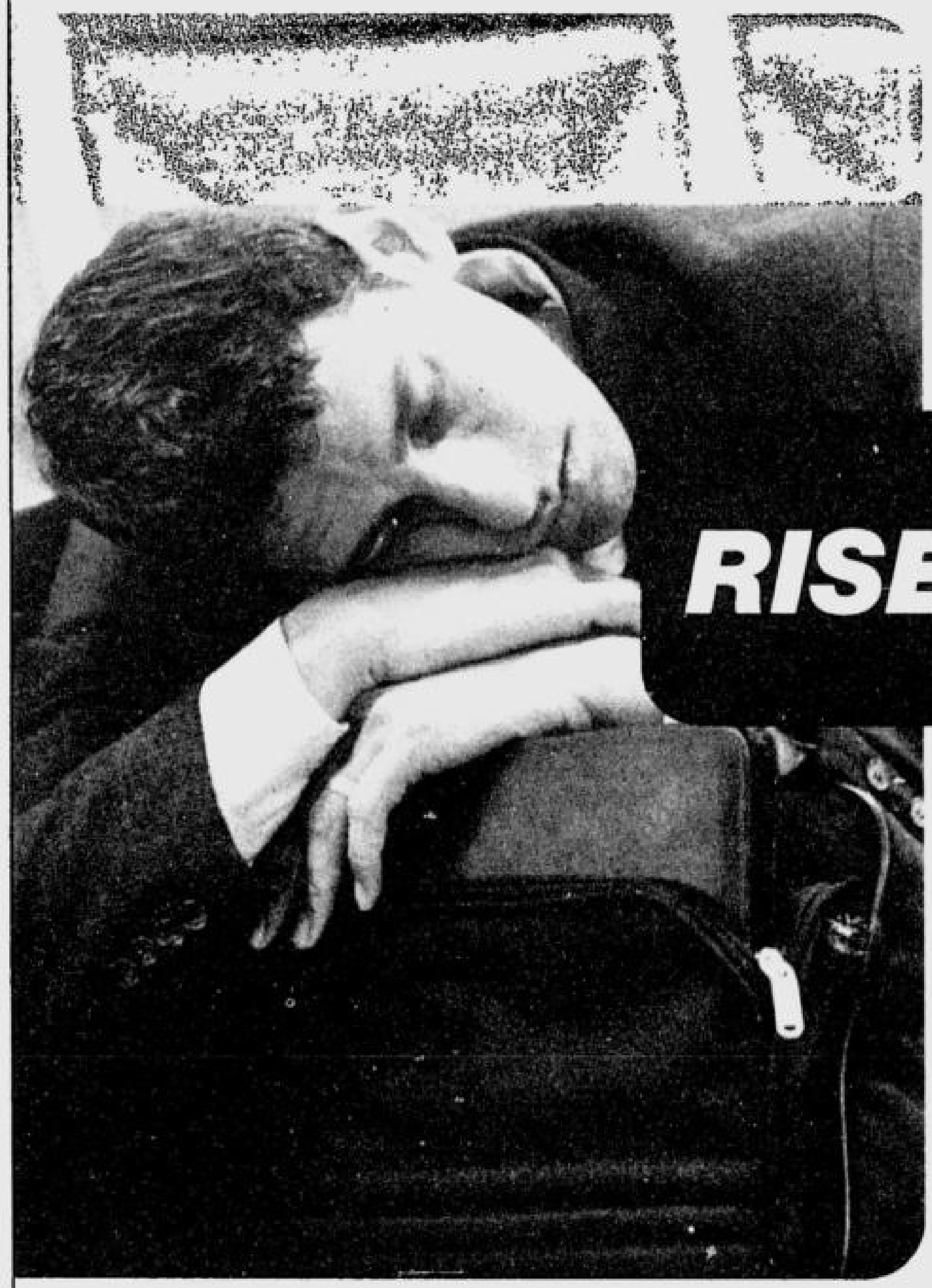
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9:00 - 9:15	*Opening Remarks*
9:15 - 9:45	*How Business Intelligence relates to CRM*
9:45 - 10:15	*Business Issues and IBM's CRM Offerings*
10:15 - 10:30	*Break*
10:30 - 11:15	*Multi-Channel ebusiness*
11:15 - 11:35	*NetCC: CRM and Call Center delivered via Net*
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Gov't plans to stop importation of SKDs

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BOARD of Investments is currently reviewing the Motor Vehicle Development Program (MVDP) with an eye on permanently shutting down the door to imported semi-knocked down vehicle units.

Trade Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said he would prefer to stop SKD imports to ensure a level playing field among all vehicle assemblers in the country.

"We can have an equal playing ground in two ways—either every one or no one can import SKDs. Our position is to give SKD import licenses to those who want it before closing the door permanently," Roxas said.

Ford Motor Co. Philippines Inc. is seeking the approval of Malacañang to its plan to bring in 2,000 semi-knocked down (SKD) units of its compact sport utility vehicles (SUV) Ford Escape at preferred duties. It is citing a similar license granted to its rival, Daimler-Chrysler, to bring in 7,000 SKD units Chrysler SUVs and pickup trucks over the next three years.

SKDs are virtually a fully assembled vehicle without tires and batteries, SKD units are charged only 3 percent to 10 percent duties compared to the 30 percent slapped on completely built up (CBU) units.

The BOI has discontinued SKD imports under the MVDP a few years ago because it felt the market has matured and adequately served by existing players. SKD imports are meant to entice assemblers to come into the Philippine market particularly during the late 1980s when there were only two assemblers and consumers had less than a handful of models to choose from.

However, SKD licenses have been granted during the period on a case-to-case basis subject to an endorsement from Malacañang. Assemblers are allowed to start their operations from SKD packs but they are obliged to shift to assembly of completely knocked down within 18 months.

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5 banks keen on Urban Bank rehab–PDIC

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE PHILIPPINE Deposit Insurance Corp. said five local commercial banks and two depositor groups of closed Urban Bank were interested in rehabilitating Urban Bank and its investment house, Urbancorp Investments Inc.

After a forum with Urban Bank and UII depositors and investors yesterday, PDIC president Norberto Nazareno told reporters that PDIC would pick on or before April 26 the investor for the bank based on the proposals it would get.

PDIC gave interested investors up to today to submit their formal expressions of interest to rehabilitate Urban Bank and/or UII. Those who would submit their expressions of interest will have until the end of the month to conduct a due diligence of the bank and its subsidiary, and up to April 15 to submit their formal offers.

Offers that will include both the bank and UII will be passed on to the Securities and Exchange Commission-appointed interim receiver of UII, Corazon de la Paz, for separate evaluation.

Nazareno said that to rehabilitate Urban Bank alone, a potential investor would need to infuse P3.5 billion to bring the bank's capital back to P2.4 billion, minimum capital requirement set by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas for 1999.

The two depositor groups interested in reviving both Urban Bank and UII, one of them is represented by former SEC associate commissioner Monico Jacob. The other one is represented by former Financial Institute Executives of the Philippines president and financial consultant Josue Camba.

Nazareno declined to identify the five banks that have verbally expressed their interest in the bank but said the list includes some universal banks.

Jacob represents three of the largest depositors/investors of Urban Bank and UII that accounted for over P3 billion in deposits and investments. These are San Miguel Corp. retirement and benefit fund, Manila Electro Co. and Petron Corp., including its employee fund.

Camba, for his part, said his group was representing about P1 billion in deposits.

Total deposits and other liabilities of Urban Bank and UII amount to P14 billion, of which uninsured deposits of the bank accounted for P8.2 billion.

Depositors and investors of Urban Bank and UII yesterday pressed the PDIC, the receiver of Urban Bank, and De la Paz to immediately open the bank and the investment house.

In a separate development, Nazareno said that the PDIC would ask the Court of Appeals to reconsider its order directing the BSP and PDIC to stop the liquidation of Orient Bank and have it reopened.

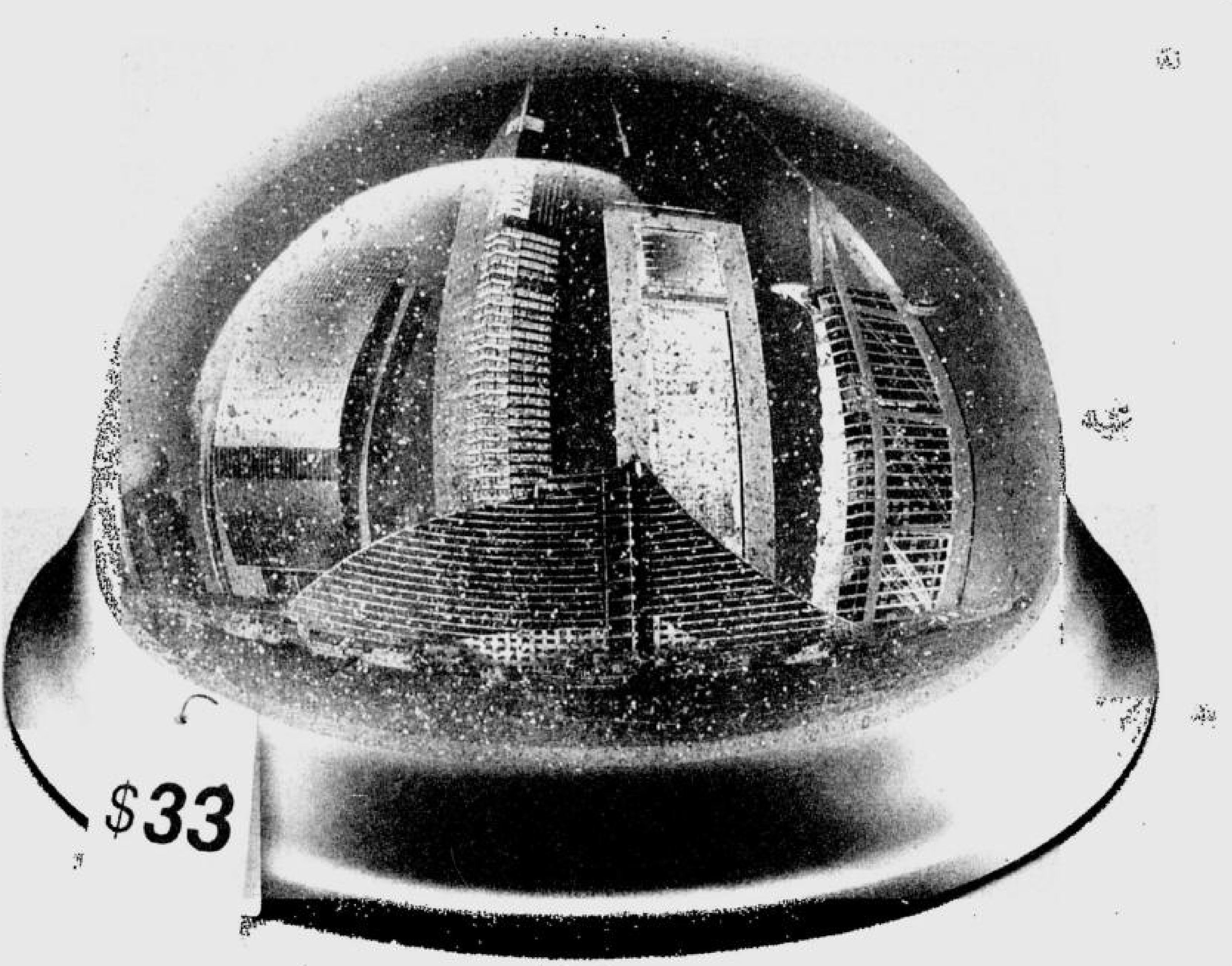
Deadline for Medicare Payments

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) is reminding all employed members of the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) from both public and private sectors, of the new schedule in the payment and collection of contributions.

Payment should be made on or before the 10th of the month following the applicable month through any of the 27 PhilHealth Accredited Collecting Banks (ACBs) and their branches nationwide.

Below is the contribution table for your reference. This will be the basis for adjusting the monthly contributions to be shared equally by the employee-member and the employer.

Monthly Salary Range	Employer Share	Employee Share
P3,499.99 & below	P37.50	P37.50
P3,500.00 to P3,999.99	P43.75	P43.75
P4,000.00 to P4,499.99	P50.00	P50.00
P4,500.00 to P4,999.99	P56.25	P56.25
P5,000.00 toP5,499.99	P62.50	P62.50
P5,500.00 to P5,999.99	P68.75	P68.75
P6,000.00 to P6,499.99	P75.00	P75.00
P6,500.00 to P6,999.99	P81.25	P81.25
P7,000.00 to P7,499.99	P87.50	P87.50
P7,500.00 & up	P93.75	P93.75



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Rotary International District 3830

Gov. Jun Perez convenes DISCON 2001 today at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel

CREATE AWARENESS
TAKE ACTION

RI Theme for RY 2000-2001

MESSAGES

My warmest felicitations to Rotary International District 3830 on its District Conference (DISCON) Fiesta 2001

For years, the Rotary International has been at the forefront of community development activities and has substantially contributed towards the upliftment of the country's economic and social condition. I hope this momentous event will strengthen camaraderie among your members and encourage you to continue your selfless dedication to nation-building.

Civic-oriented NGO's like the Rotary International continue to mold our country's citizens in becoming productive member of society. I commend your organization for alleviating the lives of our countrymen and helping them gain more decent lives.

I call on the Rotary International District 3830 to continue building the foundations for a more peaceful and prosperous Philippines in the years to come. Everything is possible if we are united in effort and spirit to promote the growth and welfare of our nation.

Good luck and more power. MABUHAY!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

Today is a very significant day for Rotary International District 3830 as we open our DISCON Fiesta 2001.

Months of planning, brainstorming, meetings, preparations and all the hard work, despite all the things happening around, the intrigues, the crisis, become worthy as we see all of you in this momentous event.

The DISCON Fiesta 2001 is a major milestone in our term as leaders of Rotary. This is the time to realize our achievements and our goals as we continue to create awareness and take action in our clubs and communities. This is our opportunity to be proud of them within the atmosphere of compassion and fellowship.

Welcome our dear guests from the different districts throughout the world, most especially to our RI President's Representative Jackson San Lien Hsieh and his spouse Julieta. Welcome to our families who have joined us. Your presence has definitely made this affair more significant. Thank you all for sharing this precious moment with us for the next few days. Thank you for witnessing with us the fruits of our labors made possible by the support, friendship and fellowship of one another and our great love of service. Rotary is not just an organization to us but a mission in life and in here you will see why it means so much.

For all who have helped organize this affair, headed by our very capable DISCON Chairman, SDG Roberto "Bobby" Icasas; host club President Abraham "Abe Jose" (RC-Parañaque Central, my home club), and all the committee chairmen and staff, I congratulate you for a job very well done. Of course, I wish to express my gratitude to SDG/DS Louie Arcangel, who helped significantly in keeping us going, being with us week after week amidst his very hectic schedule, to all the SDG's, DDG's and AG's. Thanks to all of the Jubilee Presidents who, in spite of the difficulties and struggles, are still here supporting and living up the ideals of Rotary. To all the Rotarians of RI District 3830 and sponsors, whom we cannot possibly enumerate, I extend to you my deep appreciation for your undying support. Last but absolutely not the least, I thank my beautiful wife, Vivian, and my wonderful children, Jellyn and John-john, for being right by my side all throughout this significant moment in my life, being a District Governor. Thank you, for understanding and supporting, not only me, but also my undertakings, and the projects of the district.

In the next two days, let us all enjoy the fun and fellowship open to everybody. In the last few months we have in our term, let us create memories, a legacy, to empower and inspire those who are around us to continue creating awareness and taking action.

Mabuhay tayong lahat!

HUGO "Jun" T. PEREZ, JR.
District Governor
RI District 3830, RY 2000-2001

The DISCON Fiesta 2001 Organizing Committee and the Rotary Club of Parañaque Central, the lead club in this Rotary Year District Conference, extend their warmest welcome to RIPR Jackson Hsieh and Ann Juliet, the Jubilee Presidents, Club Officers and all Rotarians attending the Conference, especially those from other countries. We also extend our warm greetings to the Group Study Exchange teams from Birmingham District 1060 and North Carolina District 7690, who are joining us in this District Conference.

In view of the current economic situation in the country, we went through a lot of pains in bringing you this District Conference. We however, were able to overcome all these obstacles with the help of so many Rotarians, Anns and friends who all contributed their time, talent and treasure in bringing to you this District Conference. I wish I could mention all their names but the list is so long. From the bottom of my heart and in behalf of Gov. Jun Perez thank you so much.

The time has come to start our District Conference for Rotary Year 2000-2001. We, the Organizing Committee and the Rotary Club of Parañaque Central wish each and every one of you a most memorable Conference.

Let's all have fun and Good bless!!!

Roberto R. Icasas

SDG ROBERTO R. ICASAS
Chairman
Overall Organizing Committee

On behalf of the Lead Club, the Rotary Club of Paranaque Central, I welcome all the delegates and guests to DISCON FIESTA 2001, the second District Conference of District 3830. As President of your Lead Club, I am proud to have been part of the working committee that accepted the honor and the challenge in ensuring the success of this momentous event vis-à-vis the enriching experience and the business opportunities the participants may enjoy during the two-day conference.

With this year's theme CREATE AWARENESS, TAKE ACTION ....In Your club, in your community, in your world, I am confident that our efforts and dedication will bear fruits specially in making life better for the less fortunate and under privileged sector of our society. May I invite you to please join us, officers and members of the Rotary Club of Paranaque Central, in praying to the Almighty to guide us and bless our hard work and sacrifices to bring you a most memorable District Conference.

Allow me also to express our most sincere thanks to those who have given their unwavering support to the Lead Club that we may live up the ideals of civic spiritedness as called for by the ideals of Rotary. To all my classmates, the Jubilee Presidents, thank you for your continuous support to me throughout my year of service and specially for the Discon Fiesta 2001. Your generosity and kindness will forever be part of my memories as a Jubilee President. To our District Governor Jun Perez, and all the other District Officers, thank for you the inspiration and the strength you so willingly share in our preparation for this event!

To all fellow Rotarians, friends and guests, we wish you all an enlightened and joyous fellowship in this two-day Discon Fiesta!

Mabuhay tayong lahat!

MARK ABRAHAM M. JOSE
President
Rotary Club of Parañaque Central

The much awaited two-day District Conference of District 3830, dubbed as DISCON 2001, will formally open today at 3 PM with opening ceremonies presided over by Gov. Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr. at the Grand Ballroom of Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel.

Some 1000 delegates representing the various clubs in the District are expected to attend the conference which is the most prestigious event of any Rotary District in the world. Dignitaries from other Rotary districts led by RI President's Representative Jackson San Lien Hsieh of Taiwan and DG John Wan of District 3450 Hong Kong. will grace the occasion. Other foreign guests include the Group Exchange Study teams from District 1060 Burmingham, England led by PP Keith Pemberton and District 7690 North Carolina, U.S.A. led by PP William "Bill" Riggs.

One of the highlights during the two-day event is the expected attendance of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who will be the special guest of honor in the afternoon of Day Two. She will be introduced by IPDG Guiller E. Tumangan.

Earlier in the day, at the Plenary Session II, DILG Sec. Jose "Joey" Lina will talk on "The Role of Looal Government in Partnership with Rotary International: Alleviation of Poverty".

DISCON 2001, only the second for the new Rotary District 3830 which was formally started July 1 of 1999 will be participated by Rotarians of clubs from Makati, Alabang, Muntinlupa, Las Piñas, Parañaque, Taguig, Pateros and Palawan. Other guests include past governors and district officers.

Major sponsors of the DISCON 2001 include the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Fortune Tobacco Corporation and the Philippines Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), DGE Ernesto "Ernie" Salas and PP Ben Resurreccion of the Rotary Club of Parañaque Central.

IN FOCUS

Gov. Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr.

Low profiled but courageous young servant leader is what best describes our own Governor Jun Perez, having been raised in a tightly knit, supportive family, with roots in Tanauan, Batangas by his public official and entrepreneur father and mother who dedicated her life in taking care of the family.

Governor Jun is one of the twelve siblings, whom all became professionals in the fields of engineering, medicine, education and public administration. An avid sportsman, he plays competitive tennis and golf, aside from bowling, chess and billiards. Even way back during his school days, he regularly played basketball, up until he graduated from the Mapua Institute of Technology (MIT) with a BS Degree in Chemical Engineering and passed the Board Exam in 1974 thus making him a licensed engineer, all within one year. After which, he met and fell in love with another Chemical Engineer, Ms. Vivian K. Bostre, whom he eventually married and they are now blessed with two beautiful children, Jellyn and John.

As a family man, Governor Jun makes it a point to spend time with his wife and children, amidst his very hectic schedule. He and spouse Vivian are still able to be quite active and deeply involved in their children's school affairs; in fact, to the point of being Head Parent Coordinators in both schools of their children.

Professionally, he started as an Operations Manager of BASF Coatings and Head of Chemical Sales in Getz Corporation. Since he has a natural flair in entrepreneurship, a businessman, like his father, he soon organized Petrichem Industrial Sales and Admark Advertising Co. Inc. where he now holds position as President of both companies and a Chairman of Precise Advertising Counselors. In organizations like Paints Association of the Philippines, Advertising Board of the Philippines, Printing Ink Association of the Philippines, Chemical Industries of the Philippines, Screen Imaging Graphics Association and Outdoor Advertising Association, Governor Jun actively served. In 1996 he became the President of the Chemical Engineers and Chemists Association of MIT. In the past few years, Governor Jun has brought all these qualifications, natural talents and organizational skills into a wider gauge of service: the Rotary International.

As a Rotarian, he joined the Rotary Club of Parañaque Central in 1987. Six years after, he was elected President that started a long career of service. His involvement in the District Level was extended when he and his wife performed a fashion presentation during the RI Convention in Taipei in 1994 and as performers in the district presentation of Les Miserables and West Side Story. In 1996 he was tasked to lead the GSE Team to Northern California and further promoted international understanding. In RY 1997-1998 he served as Vice Chairman of the CORP (Council of Rotary Presidents) and as Deputy Governor - Area Director of 34 clubs in RI District 3810. The following Rotary Year, he became the GSE Chairman of the Hosting Committee. In pursuance of his dream to serve to the fullest, he also served as Senior Deputy Governor for operations in the Rotary Year 1999-2000. His dedication and commitment shone and led him to being the District Governor of RI D3830 in this Jubilee Year of 2000-2001. It has been a roller coaster of experiences that made him a stronger and wiser servant leader that really widen his horizons in serving above self, clearly creating awareness and taking action. As a part of his being District Governor, he attended the 2000 Hongkong Rotary Institute, where he was a Rapporteur of the Foundation Seminar Leaders Briefing in Furama Hotel, Hongkong. He also serves as a Committee Member preparing the Presidential Asian Conference in Manila scheduled on April 6-8, 2001.

At the start of his term, during the Turn-Over Ceremonies, Governor Jun was described as a man always in search for a cause bigger than himself, compassionate and down to earth, a friend to his office staff, and a dedicated Rotarian, willing to reach out and dreams not only for himself but for others as well. Now, nearing the end of his term, he is looked up to as a true "man for others" as he has found the cause he searched for and realized the dreams of his fellowmen.

ROOTS - A BRIEF HISTORY OF R.I. DISTRICT 3830

In the Philippines, there were already eight Rotary clubs at the outbreak of World War II, starting with the Rotary Club of Manila, chartered on Jan. 28, 1919, the very first in Asia. This was followed by Rotary clubs in Cebu (1932), Iloilo (1933), Bacolod (1936), Baguio (1937), Davao, Dagupan and Dumaguete (1938).

After the war, more clubs were organized in the various provincial capitals. By 1964, there were a total of 51 Rotary Clubs, with about 2,000 Rotarians, initially grouped under RI District 3385.

In the same year, the district was split into two: District 385 and 380. Further divisions were made. By 1985, there were already 9 districts, namely RI Districts 3770, 3780, 3790, 3880, 3810, 3820, 3850, 3860 and 3870. In 1999, a new star is born! The emergence of RI District 3830 is stellar evidence of the dynamism of Rotary's Global Growth.

Nurtured, nourished and carefully carved out of RI District 3810 (originally District 381), the creation of District 3830 was approved in June 1998 by RI effective the 1st day of July 1999. The 10th district in the Philippines, District 3830 is born naturally strong as it encompasses, as its territorial responsibility, the cities of Makati, Parañaque, Alabang, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Taguig, Pateros and Palawan.

These are the areas of the well-developed urban cities bursting with economic activities and with the concomitant agonies and ecstasies of burgeoning Big City population. Even its provincial territory is the country's pride in tourism for its mystic charm and natural beauty. The new district started big with 57 Rotary Clubs and has now grown to 62, in a short span of less than 2 years - and still growing.

FEATHER IN CAP FOR DISTRICT 3830. Gov. Jun Perez is joined by District Officers and Jubilee Presidents in a mammoth medical and dental mission in Palawan . 70 doctors and dentists attended to some 4000 patients with various illnesses. According to Palawenos, this is the biggest medical mission in that province in memory.

RI District 3830 is a fruition of the initiative to create a new district out of District 3810, which was hatched as far back as 1993, during the incumbency of the Diamond Team PDG Leo P. De Guzman. His DS at that time, PDG Jocelyn "Jocjoc" Bolante culminated this initiative during his watch. Incidentally, the first DG of 3830 is Guiller E. Tumangan, a Diamond President. The vision was for Rotary to grow faster, thereby provide more opportunities for more people to embrance and enjoy Rotary fellowships and humanitarian services.

After a thorough process of information dissemination and consultation with clubs in District 381110, a ballot was called for. This resulted in an overwhelming approval by the clubs for the creation of a new District.

In June 8, 1998, the RI Board, in a meeting at Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A., accepted the votes and approved the birth of RI District 3830, in its Decision No. 3367.

RI District 3830 is blessed with roots of excellent leaders, who are mostly members of clubs in its jurisdiction.

These include PRID Rafael "Paeng" Hechanova of RC Makati; PDG Antonio "Jun" Tabunting, Jr., of RC Makati West; PDG Robert "Bert" Montinola of RC Makati; PDG Lorenzo "Enchong" See of RC Makati EDSA; PDG Antonio "Tony" Rufino of RC Makati West; PDG Oscar "Oskie" De Venecia of RC Makati West; PDG Herman Gamboa of RC Paranaque; PDG Jose "Joey" Benedicto of RC Makati Central; PDG Leopoldo "Leo" De Guzman of RC Alabang; PDG Wilfredo "Willy" Segovia of RC Makati Central; PDG Jocelyn "Jocjoc" Bolante of RC Parañaque South; and IPDG Guiller E. Tumangan of RC Makati West.

Now, with the equally capable leadership of DG Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr., our District is definitely going on a longer way in excellence in service and fellowship.

RI District 3830 -- true Supernova growing bigger and brighter, shining the way in living up the ideals of Rotary.

JUBILEE PRESIDENTS pose with Gov. Jun Perez for souvenir photo during the Presidents-Elect Training Seminar (PETS).

MESSAGES

To all Rotarians and Guests attending the 3830 District Conference

Gloria Rita and I send warm greetings to everyone attending this 2000-2001 District Conference. We wish to express our great appreciation for the dedication of Governor Hugo T. Perez, Jr. and Vivian, who, along with the conference committee, have put together a comprehensive program of Rotary information, fun and fellowship. You have a unique opportunity to make new friends and expand your Rotary horizons through many shared experiences. I urge you to take full advantage of this exceptional event to meet with your fellow Rotarians in a spirit of fellowship and service.

Unfortunately, it is not possible for Gloria Rita and me to visit all the conferences, so I have invited an outstanding Rotarian to represent me at your conference. Please welcome Jackson San-Lien Hsieh and his spouse Juliet, as our personal represenatatives. Jackson is an exemplary Rotariaan, an enthusiastic leader, and a delightful person. I'm sure you will enjoy their company during your district conference.

As this new millenium unfolds, I encourage you to find innovative and proactive ways to address the world's many pressing concerns. The Rotary Year 2000-2001 is your chance to make a difference. You have a real opportunity to affect your community - and all of humanity. Together we can make a difference as we CREATE AWARENESS and TAKE ACTION.

Frank J. Devlyn

FRANK J. DEVLYN
President
Rotary International

To Governor Jun and All Rotarians in District 3830:

Gratefully appreciate the honor of being asked by RI President Frank J. Devlyn to represent him at your 2001 District Conference and also for the long awaited opportunity to renew my friendship and make new acquaintances with Rotarians of District 3830.

The District Conference is the most important district meeting; it is intended to further the program of Rotary through fellowship, inspirational addresses and the discussion of matters relating to the affairs of clubs in the district and Rotary International in general. It is a business meeting, an inspirational meeting and an informative meeting. From all the publications I have received from District Governor Jun, I know District 3830 is among the best and most effective districts in Asia-Pacific of Rotary International; you have conducted many successful vocational service projects and community service projects to meet the identified needs in your communities and on International Service.

The District Conference is also a show case. I am sure all your doing good will be identified or displayed there to encourage Rotarians in your district to Create Awareness Take Action in our club, in our community and in our world.

Because of the good work of Governor Jun and Chairman and Members of the Conference Organizing Committee, we are enjoying an extraordinary good conference. As representatives of RI President Frank J. Devlyn and Gloria Rita, Juliet and I extend to all of you our wishes for the best of everything.

JACKSON SAN-LIEN HSIEH
President's Representative
Rotary International

Dear Governor Jun,

I wish to take this opportunity to send to you and all the Rotarians of District 3830, Philippines, my heartfelt congratulations as you embark upon the DISCON Fiesta 2001

Although, I will not be able to be there to witness the success of your DISCON 2001, you can rest assured that my thought will be with you.

B Rattakul

BRICHAI RATTAKUL
President Nominee
Rotary International

Nice to meet you Governor Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr., President's Representative Jackson Hsieh and all other Rotarians.

It is a great honor for me to be here as a Governor of a sister district and stand better friendship and understanding. Congratulations for our DISCON on behalf of the Rotarians in my district.

After the sisterhood joint between Past Governor Guiller Tumangan and Backlin Im Duk Young, the past Governor of our District, we've exchanged and visited each other and made firm friendship. We agreed on Matching Grant and Helping Grant over $25,000 and the project on exchanging our juveniles. In that project, you showed great affection and service mind by participating 22 clubs and hosting our children, I think that was the taking action as President Frank Devlyn said.

With this opportunity, I would like to say thanks again to PDG Jocelyn Bolante, present Governor Jun Perez, club presidents and members.

My friends Rotarians, there is a Korea Proverb that "Neighbors can be closer than brothers when they meet often."

Our District wants to be a real friend of yours forever. We hope to be a sincere friend who always help each other, whether you are happy or sad after this year, next year and the next year.

Finally, I would like to invite you to the Discon which will be held on March 5 and 6. Your visit will be a great pleasure for us. Again, congratulations for your meaningful DISCON. Thank you,

DG KANG DONG BOK
District Governor
District 3620, Korea

John Wan joined the Hong Kong Government in 1970. He has worked in a number of government departments, including Social Welfare Department, Post Office, Civic Service Training Centre, Finance Bureau, Financial Services Bureau and Home Affairs Bureau. He is now an Associate Director-General of Invest Hong Kong.

John joined Rotary in March 1987 and has been President of two Rotary clubs, including being the charter president of his present club, the Rotary Club of Kingspark Hong Kong.

He has been adviser to many youth committees involving Rotaract, Interact and Rotary Youth Leadership Awards and has served as discussion leader or moderator on various subjects at district conferences and assemblies. He was Secretary General of the 1998 District Conference, Chairman of the District Preserve Planet Earth Task Force between 1995 and 1998, and has served twice as District Governor's Group Representative and once as Assistant Governor. He was awarded the Four Avenues of Service Citation for Individual Rotarians in 1998.

At the International level, John was Assistant Secretary General of the Findings Committee of the Rotary Institute in 1995, Chairman of the Findings Committee of the 2000 Rotary Institute in Hong Kong, and a program leader at the RI President Conference in Hong Kong in 2000.

In 1998, he led the Rotaract Club of Kingspark to the Rotaract Pre-Convention in Indianapolis to receive an award for the best project in the Region and he participated in Bangladesh's 5th National Immunization Day.

He was elected Governor of the Rotary International District 3450 for 2000-2001 at the Rotary International Convention held in Singapore in June 1999. From 1 July 2000, District 3450 comprises Hong Kong, Macau and Mongolia.

He has been active with his alma mater, Wah Yan College. He was Chairman of its Past Students' Association in 1994-95 and President, in 1996-97. He has also been director of the Yuk Chi Resource Centre for Mentally Handicapped since 1991.

He and his wife Rosita have a daughter, Stephanie and a son Lawrence, both studying in the United States. All three are Paul Harris Fellows. His pastimes include trailwalking, contract bridge and music.

DG JOHN WAN
District Governor
District 3450, Hong Kong

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AT MALACANANG. Gov. Jun Perez during a courtesy call on President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in Malacanang, together with the Group Study Exchange (GSE) Team from Birminghamn, England and District officers. The Rotarians expressed their support for the economic recovery program of the President who incidentally is a Rotary spouse of RC Makati Central

DISCON FIESTA 2001 COMMITTEE

Overall Coordinator	SDG/DS Louie Arcangel
Discon 2001 Chairman	SDG Roberto "Bobby" Icasas
Programme Committee	AG Armin "Aks" Sebial
Facilities Committee	PP Guilliermo "GV" Misa
Communication Equipment Committee	Rtn. Sonny Pilares
Food & Beverage Committee	SDG Roberto "Bobby" Icasas
Security Committee	PP Mariano "Nano" Dumancas
Publication & Souvenir Program Committee	President Abraham Mark "Abe" Jose
Exhibitor's Booth Committee	PP Freddie "Fred" Jurilla
On Site Registration Committee	Rtn. Jun Garcia
Fellowship Committee	SDG Roberto "Bobby" Icasas Spouse Vivian B. Perez
Reports on Proceedings Committee	PP Hector Martinez
Protocol	IPDG Guiller Tumangan
Audit Committee	PP Rolando "Rolly" Josef
Finance Committeee	PE Ric Chua
Implementation Committee Head	SDG Edwin Afzelius
Chief of Information Center	SDG Rainelda "Rennie" Andrews
Promotion and Media Publication	DDG-YS Rudy Punzalan
Governor's Monthly Letter Editor In Chief	Rtn. Alvin Milton S. Co
Overall DISCON Secretariat	RAC District Secretary Jessy Rabago
Entertainment Director	Tony Fabella
Musical Director	Ed Palina
TASK FORCE- DISCON ATTENDANCE	SDG Angelito "Lito" Colona SDG Lorenzo "Bobby" Cinco SDG Godofredo "Jun" Galindez SDG Edwin "Ed" Afzelius
WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE	SDG Roberto "Bobby" Icasas DDG Noel Laman DDG Rolando "Rolly" Josef PP Dennis Decena Rtn. Art Dalupan

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TFS CREDIT CORPORATION
GCH INTERNATIONAL MERCANTILE INC.

DISTRICT CONFERENCE 2001
RI DISTRICT 3830
Westin Philippine Plaza
March 16 - 17, 2001

PROGRAMME

DAY ONE: MARCH 16, 2001

7:00 AM REGISTRATION
10:30 AM Ribbon Cutting - Rotary Window
Guest of Honor: RIPR Jackson San Lien Hsieh & Spouse Juliet, RC Taipei Sunrise, D3520
11:30 AM Lunch - DGN Romeo "Romy" Cruz with Presidents Nominee (RY 2002-03)
1:15 PM Photo Sessions: (Venue: Westin Philippine Plaza Stairways)
1:15 PM -RIPR Jackson Hsieh, Gov. Hugo "Jun" Perez, Jr., DGE Ernesto "Ernie" Salas, & DGN Romeo "Romy" Cruz with their respective spouses
-RIPR Jackson Hsieh, Gov. Jun Perez and other local & international District Governors
1:25 PM RIPR Jackson Hsieh, Gov. Jun Perez with Jubilee Presidents
1:35 PM RIPR Jackson Hsieh, Gov. Jun Perez with SDG's, DDG's & Assistant Governors
1:45 PM RIPR Jackson Hsieh, Gov. Jun Perez with DGE Ernie Salas & the Presidents-Elect (RY 2001-2002)
1:55 PM RIPR Jackson Hsieh, Gov. Jun Perez with DGN Romy Cruz & the Presidents-Nominee (RY 2002-03)
2:05 PM RIPR Jackson Hsieh, Gov. Jun Perez with Past District Governors
2:15 PM ASSEMBLY AT THE BALLROOM
Greeters: SDG Godofredo "Jun" Galindez, Jr. & Pres. Marian Guzman
3:00 PM Plenary Session One: OPENING CEREMONIES
3:10 PM Entry of Dignitaries
3:15 PM Call To Order - Governor Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr.
3:20 PM Doxology - St. Scholastica's Choir
3:25 PM Entry of Colors - Philippine Marine Guard Details
3:30 PM Philippine National Anthem - Philippine Marine Drum & Bugle Team
Taiwan's National Anthem
3:40 PM Philippine Medley - Makati Rotarians
3:50 PM Welcome Remarks - SDG Roberto "Bobby" Icasas, Discon 2001 Chairman
3:55 PM Introduction of Dignitaries - SDG Godofredo "Jun" Galindez, Jr.
4:05 PM Roll Call of Clubs - SDG Louie Arcangel, District Secretary
4:25 PM The Way We Were - Rtn. Nikki Yngson, RC Makati Paseo de Roxas
4:30 PM Introduction of the District Governor's Family
-Jubilee President Abraham "Abe" Jose of RC Paranaque Central
4:35 PM Introduction of the District Governor Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr.
-PDG Leopoldo "Leo" De Guzman
4:40 PM Governor's Address - Governor Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr.
5:00 PM Introduction of RIPR Jackson Hsieh - PDG Antonio "Tony" Rufino
5:05 PM Address of the RIPR Jackson San-Lien Hsieh
5:35 PM Jubilee Anthem - Jubillee Presidents led by Pres. Marjorie "Marge" Lamberte of RC Paranaque Metro & Pres. Alfredo "Al" Joaquin of RC Makati Greenbelt
5:40 PM Adjournment - Governor Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr.
Moderators - DDG Mario "Mar" Magat & AG Ma. Melita "Milet" Belleena
6:30 PM Dinner & Fellowship - Barrio Fiesta
8:00 PM District Presentations
10:00 PM MORE FELLOWSHIPS
Moderators - DRC Ireneo "Rene" Aquino & DDG Cynthia Reyes

DAY TWO: MARCH 17, 2001

6:45 AM Breakfast hosted by DG Jun T. Perez with RIPR Jackson Hsieh & the Jubilee Presidents
7:15 AM Breakfast hosted by DGE Ernie Salas with RIPR Jackson Hsieh, Gov. Jun T. Perez & the Presidents-Elect
9:00 AM Plenary Session II: CREATE AWARENESS, TAKE ACTION
9:05 AM Call to Order by Governor Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr.
9:10 AM Invocation - Pres. Benedicto "Ben" Figueroa, RC Paranaque South
9:15 AM National Anthem - Pres. Dennis "Junjun" Abcede, Jr., RC Makati Paseo De Roxas
9:20 AM DGN Election Results - PDG Herman Gamboa
9:30 AM Proclamation of DGN - Governor Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr.
9:40 AM Introduction of DGN Romeo "Romy" Cruz - Pres. Gustavo "Gus" Tambunting, RC Palanyng
9:45 AM "Outlook for RY 2002-2003" - DGN Romeo "Romy" Cruz
10:00 AM RAFFLE/COFFEE BREAK
Moderators: PP "Isidro" Sid Garcia & President Patria "Patty" Chiong
10:15 AM Introduction of DGE Ernesto "Ernie" Salas - Pres. Fernando "Boy" Ampil, Jr., RC Makati North
10:20 AM "What's In Store for RY 2001-2002?" - DGE Ernesto "Ernie" Salas
10:30 AM Introduction of PRID Sabino "Benny" Santos - Pres. Patricia "Patt" Lontoc, RC Makati Dasmarinas
10:32 AM "What Rotary Means To Me" - PRID Sabino "Benny" Santos
10:42 AM Introduction of DG John Wan, D3450 Hongkong - Pres. Anna Laura Edwards, RC Brooke's Point
10:45 AM The RI Theme As Applied In My District - DG John Wan, D3450, Hongkong
10:55 AM Introduction of DILG Secretary Jose "Joey" Lina
-Pres. Carolina "Carol" Llanillo, RC Makati Pasong Tamo
10:58 AM "The Role of Local Government In Partnership with Rotary International: Alleviation of Poverty"
- DILG Secretary Jose "Joey" Lina
11:10 AM Introduction of SDG Rainelda "Rennie" Andrews
- Pres. Ernesto "Ernie" Urrutia, RC Las Pinas West
11:12 AM Importance of Membership Development & Growth - SDG Rainelda "Rennie" Andrews
11:20 AM Introduction of DG Dong Bok Kang - Pres. Dae "Philip" Bang, RC Rizal West
11:23 AM Special Message - DG Dong Bok Kang, RI District 3620, Korea
11:35 AM Rotary Today - RIPR Jackson Hsieh
11:55 AM RECESS
Moderators - SDG Lito Colona & Jubilee President Lilia Pajarillo
12:00 NN Lunch & Raffle
12:25 PM Plenary Session III: The Rotary Foundation
12:30 PM Introduction of Dignitaries and Guests - PDG Antonio "Jun" Tambunting, Jr.
12:35 PM Presentation and Recognition:
New PHF/Benefactors - to be presented by IPDG Guiller Tumangan
Membership Gains - to be presented by SDG Rennie Andrews
DISCON Attendance - to be presented by SDG Lito Colona
12:47 PM Service Above Self Awards Presentation
12:50 PM SPECIAL AWARDS to be presented by RIPR Jackson San Lien Hsieh on "ROTARY CENTER PIONEER DISTRICT FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES IN PEACE & CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS" to the following:
Governor Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr.
IPDG Guiller Tumangan
DGE Ernesto "Ernie" Salas
12:55 PM Introduction of PDG Oscar "Oskie" de Venecia - Pres. Eduardo "Dodie" Caniza, RC Makati South
1:00 PM Polio Plus - PDG Oscar "Oskie" de Venecia
1:15 PM Introduction of the Guest of Honor - IPDG Guiller E. Tumangan
1:20 PM Our Guest of Honor - Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo President, Republic of the Philippines
1:50 PM GROUP A
Rotaract - A Partner In Service of Rotary - DRR Anna Caro, RAC Makati West
2:00 Presentation of GSE Program
-PP Ireneo "Rene" Aquino, GSE Hosting Committee Chairman (Inbound)
-PP Rafael "Raffy" Ilagan, GSE Selection Committee Chairman (Outbound)
2:10 Outbound Team to England Team Leader: DDG/DDS Miguel "Migs" Puyat
2:20 Presentation by GSE Inbound Team from England
Team Leader: PP Keith Pemberton, D1060
2:30 Outbound Team to North Carolina
Team Leader: DDT Bienvenido "Doodz" Policarpio
2:40 Presentation by GSE Inbound Team from North Carolina
Team Leader: PP William "Bill" Riggs, D7690
2:50 Acknowledgment - Pres. Abraham "Abe" Jose, RC Paranaque Central
3:00 Recess
Moderators - DDG Jaime "Jimmy" Cura & CP Rebecca "Becky" Singson
BREAK-AWAY SESSIONS:
GROUP B Presiding Officer: PP Eduardo "Dindo" Delos Angeles, Chairman
1:50 Plenary Session - Presentation of Resolutions/Business Session
1:51 Invocation - Jubilee Presidents
1:55 Report on Credentials & Elections - PP Hector "Hec" Martinez, Chairman
2:10 District Resolutions - PP Eduardo "Dindo" Delos Angeles, Chairman
2:25 Recommendations to the RI Council of Legislation
2:40 Recommendations to the RI Board
2:50 Recess
GROUP C Rotarian In Charge: PP Rolando "Rolly" Josef
1:50 Election of the Representative & Alternate Representative to the DNC Membership
3:00 Recess
GROUP D Rotary Spouses' Workshop
1:50 Introduction of Dr. Vicky Bello - Spouse Lita Gamboa
1:55 Body Fits - Vicky Bello
3:00 Recess
Moderator: Spouse Araceli "Chichi" Salas

GOVERNOR'S BALL

6:30 PM Invocation - Pres. Roland Young, RC Makati
6:35 PM Dinner & Raffle
The 50's - Makati Rotarians
7:35 PM Heal the World - RC Makati Dasmarinas
UNITY - RC Makati JP Rizal & Jubilee Presidents
8:05 PM Message - Governor Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr.
8:15 PM Message - RIPR Jackson San Lien Hsieh
8:25 PM What A Wonderful World - Rtn. Robert "Bobby" Hyndman, RC Paranaque South
8:30 PM Adjournment - Governor Hugo "Jun" T. Perez, Jr.
8:31 PM District Presentations
9:55 PM Major Raffle Announcement - Governor Jun T. Perez
10:00 PM Ballroom Dancing / Fellowship / More Raffles
Moderators - SDG Godofredo "Jun" Galindez, Jr. & PP Socorro "Cory" Quirino

Kita suspends operations

By Doris C. Dumlao

KITA Corp., a subsidiary of consumer electronics manufacturer Solid Group Inc., will suspend its operations indefinitely starting April 15.

The decision came after Kita lost production orders from its principal customer Aiwa Co. Ltd. since December.

"Aiwa is in the process of restructuring all of its overseas manufacturing facilities and Aiwa cannot give a definite timetable for the resumption of its production orders to Kita," Solid Group said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Another subsidiary, Clark Plastics Manufacturing Corp., which manufactures and supplies components to Kita will likewise shut down the operation of its styropor division.

Solid Group spokesperson Enrique Ligeralde said both Kita and Clark would resume manufacturing operations as soon as production volume becomes viable for their operations.

Ligeralde admitted that the viability of these subsidiaries had been adversely affected by the loss of production orders from Aiwa, which is owned by Sony Corp. of Japan, since December.

"The concerns of all employees and staff who may be affected by the closure are being addressed by management in accordance with the law and existing company policies," he said.

Solid Group has full marketing control over domestic Aiwa Operations. It exports some Aiwa-brand appliances such as television sets.

The company also has a joint venture with Sony Corp. on the marketing and distribution of Sony products sold in the Philippines. Sony owns 67 percent of the joint venture while Solid owns the balance.

Analysts said both Aiwa and Sony have suffered from a slowdown in demand in the local market due to the influx of cheap electronic products from South Korea and mainland China.

"It is no longer competitive. Solid has been streamlining since 1998. It has factories in China which are competitive because labor costs there are lower. Here in the Philippines, it has been closing factories since 1998," an analyst from a foreign brokerage house said. *With a report from Reuters*

DISCLOSURES

PHILEX Mining Corp. will hold its regular annual meeting of stockholders on June 29, 2 p.m. at the Function Modules ABCD, 4th floor, Manila Galleria Suites, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

* * *

PACEMCO Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 30, 10 a.m., at the New World Renaissance Hotel, Makati City.

* * *

RIZAL Commercial Banking Corp. said that its interest in **Urban Bank** was very preliminary. It is still in the process of evaluating available information to determine the prospects of rehabilitating Urban Bank. Also, its annual stockholders' meeting will be held on June 25, 4 p.m., at the 4th floor, Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Makati City.

* * *

EURO-MED Laboratories Phil. Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 16, 10 a.m., at the Philippine Columbian Association, Paco, Manila.

* * *

iPEOPLE Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 25, 3 p.m., at the 47th floor, Executive Lounge, RCBC Plaza, Makati City.

* * *

THE BOARD of **Forum Pacific Inc.** accepted the resignation of director Sherwin Gatchalian effective Feb. 26 and elected Evelyn de la Rosa as his replacement. *Compiled by Armin P. Adina, PDI Research*

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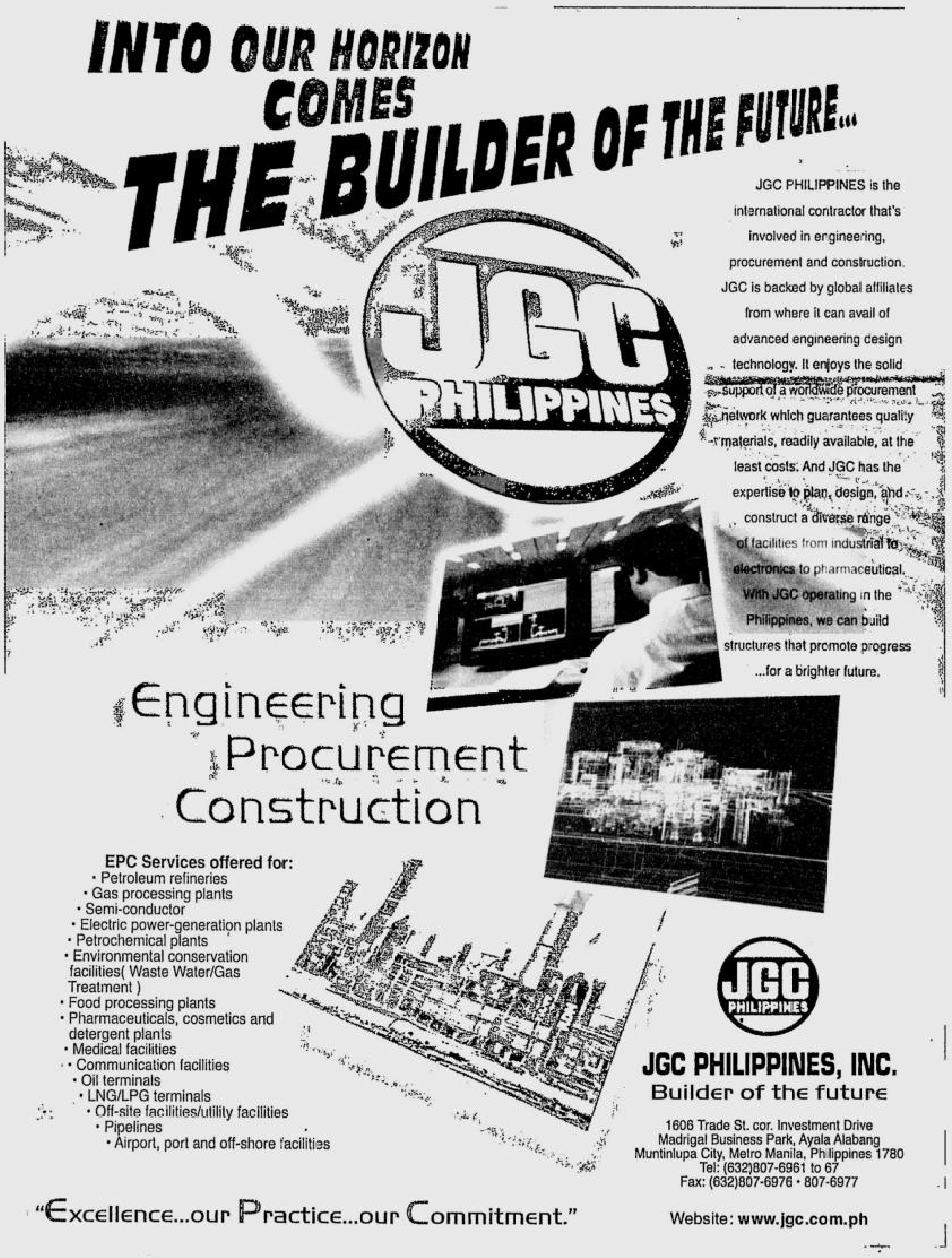
METRO MANILA BRANCHES
MANILA · SUCAT · PASAY · TAYTAY · LAS PIÑAS · MARCOS HI WAY · PASIG · ALABANG · QUEZON AVENUE · MUNTINLUPA · KARUHATAN
MUÑOZ 1207 EDSA 372-4687 • 372-1593 OPEN DAILY UP TO 7:00 pm
PROVINCIAL BRANCHES
MEYCAUAYAN · MARILAO, BOCAUE · TURO, BOCAUE · GUIGUINTO · MALOLOS · BALIUAG · ANGELES · TARLAC
DASMARIÑAS, CAVITE
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK FROM 8:30 AM TO 5:30 PM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Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Thursday, 15, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	68.5	69	67.5	68.5	543,200
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	51	51	49	49	61,700
First E-Bank Corp.	2.02	2.02	2	2	30,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	219	222	218	221	97,020
Philippine National Bank	42.5	42.5	41	42.5	94,900
Phil. Savings Bank	28	29.5	28	29.5	1,200
Security Bank Corp.	21.5	21.5	21.5	21.5	1,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	25	25	24.5	25	5,300
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.38	1.38	538,000
Filipino Fund Inc	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	160,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1205	1205	1200	1200	3,910
Sun Life Financial Serv.	875	875	865	875	17,640
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	42	42	41.5	42	38,600
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.54	0.54	1,060,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	680	700	680	700	140
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	100,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	4,000
Piltel	0.59	0.6	0.59	0.6	1,220,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	180,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	760	765	755	760	134,140
Ivantage Corp.	0.94	0.96	0.94	0.96	200,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.06	0.065	140,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	49	49	46	48	7,000
Manila Electric Co. B	59	59	54.5	54.5	760,400
Petron Corp.	1.7	1.74	1.68	1.72	4,142,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.86	0.9	170,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.08	1.08	1	1	268,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.1	1.14	1.1	1.14	1,169,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.46	0.5	0.46	0.5	30,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	120,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	2	2	2	2	50,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.21	0.25	0.2	0.25	350,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.34	0.34	440,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	10.75	10.75	10	10	13,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	100,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	2,870,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	1.98	2	1.98	2	4,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11.75	11.75	11.5	11.5	301,700
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	36	36	35	35	87,500
Pancake House Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	10,000
RFM Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.12	1.12	264,000
San Miguel Corp. A	46.5	47	46.5	47	75,200
San Miguel Corp. B	53	53	52.5	53	53,400
Universal Robina Corp.	5	5	5	5	6,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	600,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.56	520,000
Ayala Corp.	7.2	7.3	7.2	7.3	397,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	200,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.52	1.52	1.5	1.5	919,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12.25	12.25	11.75	11.75	2,300
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.88	0.9	0.88	0.9	200,000
APC Group Inc.	0.19	0.22	0.19	0.22	1,400,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	58,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.55	2.55	2.55	2.55	50,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	10,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.85	2.85	2.65	2.65	4,664,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.17	0.17	660,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.23	1,100,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	470,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.42	520,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	1,500,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.1	1.14	1.1	1.14	670,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	22.75	23	22.25	22.75	291,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,000,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.28	0.29	1,710,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.2	0.34	0.2	0.34	20,000
House of Investments Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	30,000
Ionics Inc.	11.5	12	11.5	12	90,600
Ipeople Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	50,000
Ipeople Inc. B	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	20,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	620,000
Keppel Phil. Holdings B	1.06	1.06	1.02	1.02	70,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.83	0.83	0.8	0.83	2,270,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.5	0.5	4,150,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.54	0.57	830,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.32	0.34	1,990,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	1,100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	10,000
Music Corp.	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.7	286,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	60,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	70,000
Reynolds Philippine Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	100,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.95	0.96	0.95	0.96	130,000
SPI Technologies Inc	11.75	12	11.5	12	113,800
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.55	0.55	2,600,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.6	0.62	7,660,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	850,000
Manila Jockey Club	18	18.5	18	18.5	52,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	3,000,000
Philippine Racing Club	4	4	4	4	500,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	41	41	41	41	31,900
Dmci Holdings Inc - Pref.	495	495	490	490	1,260
Equitable PCI Bank-War	3.8	3.8	3.65	3.65	125,000
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	700	700	700	700	1,000
Jollibee Warrants	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	7,100
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	334,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.5	10.25	10.5	5,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,400
Waterfront Phils-Warrant	0.055	0.055	0.05	0.05	2,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.6	5.7	5.5	5.7	3,552,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	80,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	7,730,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.33	0.35	6,080,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.2	2.24	2.16	2.2	10,010,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.38	0.43	0.38	0.43	230,000
SM Development Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	10,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.6	6.6	6.4	6.5	2,120,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	5,000,000
MINING					
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3	3	3	3	7,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.205	0.205	0.2	0.2	810,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.006	67,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.006	7,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	58,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	7,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	20,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.225	0.225	0.22	0.22	350,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	13,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	9,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0048	0.0048	15,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	50,000
Pacifica	0.015	0.015	0.014	0.015	7,500,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.09	0.09	0.085	0.085	1,800,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,554,370	86,383,290.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	592,560,440	234,098,580.00
PRO	34,812,000	60,545,940.00
Mining	140,687,000	1,147,450.00
OIL	47,350,000	469,800.00
GRAND TOTALS :	816,963,810	382,645,060.00

	AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	591.03	DOWN	5.45
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,041.48	DOWN	40.98
PRO	563.53	DOWN	12.15
Mining	1,211.36	DOWN	49.02
OIL	1.82	DOWN	0.05
All Shares Index	726.07	DOWN	14.98
Composite	1,491.61	DOWN	32.18

NO. OF ADVANCES: 10; NO. OF DECLINES. 79; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 39; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 128; NO. OF TRADES: 2,632

CURRENCIES

Mar. 15, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency In US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.097333	1.000000	48.1410
Japan	Yen	0.009068	0.008264	0.3978
United Kingdom	Pound	1.586305	1.445600	69.5926
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.140692	0.128213	6.1723
Switzerland	Franc	0.649655	0.592031	28.5010
Canada	Dollar	0.704730	0.642220	30.9171
Singapore	Dollar	0.621085	0.565995	27.2476
Australia	Dollar	0.547243	0.498703	24.0081
Bahrain	Dinar	2.910854	2.652661	127.7018
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.292591	0.266638	12.8362
Brunei	Dollar	0.622247	0.567054	27.2985
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000109	0.000099	0.0048
Thailand	Baht	0.025140	0.022910	1.1029
UAE	Dirham	0.298773	0.272272	13.1074
Korea	Won	0.000860	0.000784	0.0377
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.911300	43.8709
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.46594	22.4308
France	Franc	0.152450	0.138927	6.6881
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.413530	19.9077
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.066227	3.1882
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.022591	1.0876
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000471	0.0227
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.153270	7.3786
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004546	0.2188
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005477	0.2637
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024790	0.022591	1.0876
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.157112	55.7045

Bank shares free fall amid fears of collapse

TOKYO—The brewing crisis in Japanese banking exploded into the open Thursday after a new alarm over their financial health by ratings agency Fitch IBCA caused the Tokyo stock market to plummet.

The government scrambled to contain the fallout as a free-fall in banking shares drove the Nikkei-225 average down 169.27 points, or 1.4 percent, to close the morning session at 11,674.32.

One of Japan's biggest lenders, Daiwa Bank Ltd., strongly denied rumors in overseas markets that it was close to collapse. The speculation was "groundless" and "lacks basis in fact," a spokesman said.

Hakuo Yanagisawa, state minister for financial affairs, said there were no grounds for alarm after Fitch on Wednesday placed the individual ratings of 19 Japanese banks on negative review.

"It is unreasonable that concerns over Japanese banks' health caused stock sell-offs in Japan and the US," he told a fiscal committee meeting in the upper house of parliament.

"Write offs of non-performing loans by banks will not threaten their capital adequacy ratios," he said.

Fitch said in a statement that it has placed the individual ratings of 19 Japanese banks on "rating watch negative."

Besides the country's falling stock prices, the agency also cited lingering asset quality problems on the banks' future performance.

The capacity of each bank to write off problem assets amid Japan's weakening economy will be part of the focus of the review, Fitch said.

It also said, however, that its long-term ratings of the banks remain unaffected by the review and "are generally stable in view of the strong government support."

Among the banks are Japan's largest, including Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi, Fuji Bank, Sumitomo Bank and Sanwa Bank.

Concerns about bank earnings have grown in recent days as Tokyo share prices have plunged on worries about the health of Japan's economy and political uncertainty.

Senior government officials led by the embattled prime minister, Yoshiro Mori, held a crisis meeting Thursday on measures proposed by the ruling coalition parties to support the stock market and revitalize the economy.

Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa agreed to provide financial support for a proposed body to buy the cross-shareholdings of banks and corporations, which is aimed at propping up the market.

Yanagisawa told reporters: "Miyazawa said that if losses appear when financial institutions and corporations invest their cross-shareholdings into the stock purchase body, the finance ministry will take care of the losses via fiscal spending."

Lehman Brothers banking analyst Nozomu Kunishige agreed that Japanese banks could cover their debt write offs despite the slump on the Tokyo bourse, which is destroying the unrealized gains on their vast shareholdings.

Despite widespread concerns in the market, "increased latent losses on their stockholdings alone will not directly trigger insolvency," he said.

All of Japan's banks still had capital adequacy ratios of more than 10 percent, he said, over the 8 percent required by the Bank for International Settlements for international banking operations.

"It is true, however, that any increase in their latent losses will lower their risk-taking ability, while making it harder for them to raise funds for higher bad loan write-offs," said Kunishige.

"We also cannot rule out the possibility of a run on a bank, depending on the depth of the ongoing deterioration in market and depositor sentiment." *AFP*

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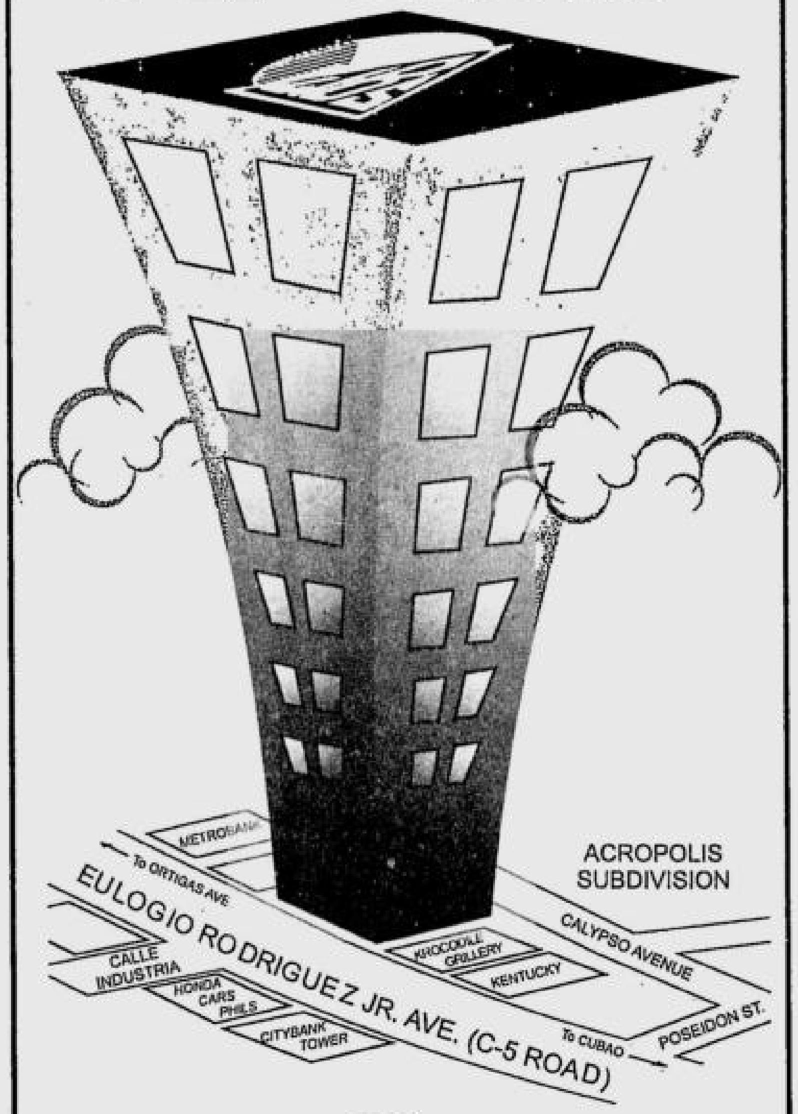

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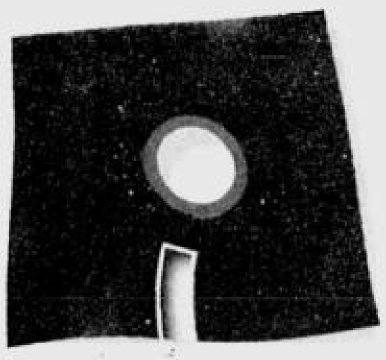

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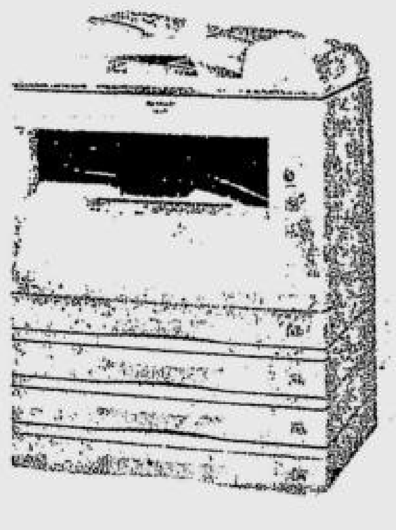

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Southeast Asia auto sales up

SINGAPORE—New vehicle sales in Southeast Asia's four biggest markets rose 25 percent in January from a year ago, setting the trend for a softer vehicle market this year, an industry monitor said Thursday.

The number of new vehicles sold in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand totaled 69,449 units, up from 55,585 in January last year, Automotive Resources Asia Ltd. said in its latest report.

New vehicle sales increased by 78 percent to 19,637 units in Indonesia, 23 percent to 27,045 units in Malaysia and a modest 8 percent to 17,031 units in Thailand.

The Philippines was the odd-man out, seeing vehicle sales fall 17 percent to 5,736 units in January—when the political crisis climaxed in a military-backed civilian uprising that ousted President Joseph Estrada.

"Though signs for economic recovery remain unclear in the region's economy, January sales figures from all countries except the Philippines offered positive signals for the new vehicle market this year," said Automotive Resources associate Chabaphrai Srinont.

"However, we do not expect the market to grow as strongly as the last year, as existing financial and economic problems of the region will likely draw back the momentum," Chabaphrai said. *AFP*

GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM
Financial Center, Pasay City, Metro Manila 1308

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Government Service Insurance System is happy to announce the winners in the Quarterly Raffle of pensioners enrolled in the Pension Payments Through Banks Program (PPTBP) of the System held on December 2000, to wit:

Office/ Branch	Prize	Name	Retirement Number
Pension Administration Department (Home Office)	First Prize (P5,000.00)	Aurea Arayon	R-036220
		Filipina Legaspi	PB-270583
		Francisca Soliven	PB-30955
	Second Prize (P3,000.00)	Paulino Manuel	PB-236825
		Hermogenes Maon	PB-39063
		Antonio Margallo	PB-201793
	Third Prize (P2,000.00)	Teresita Tantingco	PB-181591
		Eloisa Reyes	PB-155049
		Carlos Ducducan	PB-177983
AREA I Baguio	First Prize	Filomena Clamor	PB-167917
	Second Prize	Magdalena Bumakil	DI-003563
	Third Prize	Rosendo Casem	PB-119014
Bataan	First Prize	Asuncion M. Ligsay	R-252753
	Second Prize	Marcelina Pascua	PB-203186
	Third Prize	Ranido Trinidad	PB-006474
Batangas	First Prize	Erodita Bucao	PB-036585
	Second Prize	Consorcia Ledesma	PB-173284
	Third Prize	Isabel Kamus	PB-152376
Cabanatuan	First Prize	Felipe Cruz	PB-115502
	Second Prize	Flora Tolentino	PB-139422
	Third Prize	Severina De Guzman	R-245023
Cauayan	First Prize	Paulina Monterubio	PB-214983
	Second Prize	Leonora Derupe	PB-029332
	Third Prize	Manuel Aquino	PB-192227
Dagupan	First Prize	Eugenio A. Campos	RB-2229
	Second Prize	Rosalina E. Ayento	R-172290
	Third Prize	Pablo G. Tolentino	PB-30481
Laoag	First Prize	Santos R. Tungpalan	PB-107424
	Second Prize	Cesario Agbayani	R-055522
	Third Prize	Editha R. Jimenez	PB-172674
Lucena	First Prize	Esberta T. Manza	PB-191453
	Second Prize	Josefa Alcazar	PB-152424
	Third Prize	Belarmino Jardeleza	PB-41111
Naga	First Prize	Francisca R. Ricafrente	DC-003163
	Second Prize	Virginia G. Monte	DC-001908
	Third Prize	Gerardo B. Oraa	R-143082
Palawan	First Prize	Simplicio C. Pacaldo	PB-120823
	Second Prize	Rafael M. Calalin	R-217310
	Third Prize	Cayetano Valones	R-060652
Pampanga	First Prize	Victoria C. De Castro	RP-001349
	Second Prize	Conrado L. Tuano	PB-163704
	Third Prize	Lucas S. Morales	PB-128739
Sorsogon	First Prize	Gloria R. Dino	PB-165463
	Second Prize	Concepcion D. Danao	R-190734
	Third Prize	Esperanza O. Gavarra	R-228251
Tarlac	First Prize	Macaria S. Munoz	PB-251156
	Second Prize	Jesus C. Villar	PB-233173
	Third Prize	Santiago M. Pascua	PB-117534
Tuguegarao	First Prize	Abraham G. Varilla	PB-132075
	Second Prize	Julia V. Villaflor	R-062885
	Third Prize	Libertad B. Razon	RY-000016
AREA II Bacolod	First Prize	Loreto M. Peraren	PB-218324
	Second Prize	Jose A. Malan	PB-032859
	Third Prize	Feliciano Y. Jusayan	R-121825
Butuan	First Prize	Beatriz Adorable	DD-003493
	Second Prize	Conrado V. De Guzman	R@002642
	Third Prize	Virginia S. Canda	PB-145778
Cagayan de Oro	First Prize	Leoncio T. Nacion	PB-028332
	Second Prize	Mamerto T. Fernandez	RF-001483
	Third Prize	Bruna T. Macapil	PB-129989
Cebu	First Prize	Julita Labra	RD-004364
	Second Prize	Eugenia Aton	PB-139250
	Third Prize	Ruperta Cinco	PB-027472
Cotabato	First Prize	Primitivo Isla	R-202494
	Second Prize	Catalina Dar	PB-109321
	Third Prize	Rosario Pedroso	PB-201060
Davao	First Prize	Exaltacion Degamo	RG-6444
	Second Prize	Escolastica Bebanco	DG-3758
	Third Prize	Farnacio Pedida	PB-29073
Dipolog	First Prize	Elith Y. Famacion	PB-139296
	Second Prize	Alfonsa J. Tagabucba	PB-037362
	Third Prize	Benigno Jumawan	PB-101668
Dumaguete	First Prize	Sergio A. Zamora	PB-113110
	Second Prize	Wilfredo P. Velez	PB-024450
	Third Prize	Catalina G. Romano	PB-026068
Iloilo	First Prize	Daisy Aguinaldo	RE-006610
	Second Prize	Florida Peralta	R-081695
	Third Prize	Josefina Abilo	RE-006507
Tacloban	First Prize	Luisa Caldo	PB-005734
	Second Prize	Felix B. Eamiguel	R-204596
	Third Prize	Cleofe Esperitu	DJ-000896
Zamboanga	First Prize	Laurencio E. Saavedra	R-236675
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	Third Prize	Carlos B. Geronilla	PB-18511

Winning pensioners can claim their cash prizes at the nearest GSIS office.

If you are a pensioner, you too can win a cash prize in the succeeding quarterly raffles by enrolling in the GSIS PPTBP. Enrollment forms are available in all GSIS Branch Offices and at the GSIS Headquarters, Pasay City.

To our winning pensioners, our congratulations. The PPTBP Raffle is just one of the programs where the GSIS can extend additional benefits to its valued members.

(Sgd.) WINSTON F. GARCIA
President and General Manager

March 16, 2001 -- Inquirer

World economy poised for 2002 recovery–IMF

WASHINGTON—The International Monetary Fund is forecasting that the economic slowdown in the United States will be short-lived, and that the world's richest economy will rebound with solid growth in 2002.

A senior IMF official told Reuters on Wednesday that, according to a draft of the fund's World Economic Outlook (WEO), growth in the US economy will slow to 1.7 percent in 2001 but will accelerate to a 3-percent growth clip in 2002.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, the official confirmed that the draft report of the closely guarded WEO, which is due to be released in late April, forecasts global growth of 3.5 percent this year and a pick up to 4.0 percent in 2002.

That latest forecast for global growth in 2001 is much slower than the 4.2 percent the fund projected in its last WEO released last September.

The IMF's 2002 forecast for the United States comes amid a dive in stock prices and concerns about whether the American economy can shake off what many economists hope will only amount to a temporary slowdown.

With the US economy not expected to pick up speed again until the second half of the year, markets are on edge for any indication that growth will actually reignite.

The swiftness of the US downshift is underscored by how sharply the IMF has cut its 2001 forecast since saying in the last publication of the WEO that the US economy would grow by a robust 3.2 percent this year.

Mussa said the US' ability to avoid a recession—loosely defined as six months of economic contraction—was crucial to global growth prospects. He said he thought the world's wealthiest economy would "skirt the edge" of negative growth, noting the "substantial slowdown in manufacturing."

"Autos are an important part of that (slowdown), so is high-tech," Mussa said, adding that computer and Internet-related industries could suffer a nominal recession, meaning negative growth in the value of the goods and services they produced.

Indeed, the outlook for the whole Group of Seven industrialized nations is worse for this year than the Washington-based lender forecast in September.

The draft of the twice yearly report forecast growth in the 12 nations that make up the eurozone of 2.7 percent this year and 2.9 percent in 2002. Last September the IMF forecast eurozone growth of 3.4 percent.

But despite the fact that the eurozone faces slower growth this year should the estimates pan out, Europe would expand at a faster clip than the United States—reversing the trend in recent years which has seen US growth far outstrip Europe's.

Growth in Germany in the latest draft of the WEO is expected at 2.2 percent in 2001—down from an earlier forecast of 3.3 percent growth—and 2.6 percent in 2002.

The report, which offers a snapshot of expectations for the world's economies, predicted sluggish growth of 1.0 percent this year in Japan—compared to an earlier forecast of 1.8 percent—and 1.8 percent in 2002.

The report forecast Italian economic growth of 2.3 percent in 2001, down from an earlier 3.0 percent forecast, and 2.8 percent in 2002. Growth in France is seen at 2.7 percent in 2001, compared to an earlier estimate of 3.5 percent, and 2.8 percent in 2002.

Growth in the United Kingdom is forecast at 2.7 percent in 2001, compared to a September estimate of 2.8 percent, and 2.9 percent in 2002. In Canada, the expectation is for growth of 2.5 percent in 2001, down from an earlier 2.8 percent estimate. *Reuters*

Clamor up for deep Fed rate cut

NEW YORK—The clamor for a steep Federal Reserve interest rate cut grew louder on Wednesday as the carnage in stocks deepened and some disgruntled investors heaped scorn on revered Fed chair Alan Greenspan.

Futures contracts and market economists on Wednesday both registered higher expectations for the Fed to cut the key federal funds rate on overnight bank lending by 0.75 percentage points at its March 20 meeting to 4.75 percent.

At the end of last week, the Fed funds futures contract, a barometer of rate expectations, reflected about an 85 percent chance of a half point or 50-basis-point rate cut and only a 15 percent chance of a three-quarter point or 75-basis-point cut.

After the global stock market sell-off this week, the contract reflected about a 60 percent chance of a 0.75 point boost.

"We need 100 basis points of rate cuts to get the economy going in a new direction," said Graham Tanaka, president of Tanaka Growth Fund which manages $200 million in assets.

"One of the dangers is if the Fed doesn't move faster, we could have another Asian crisis. The Fed could lose control—if they don't loosen quickly, it could have a ripple effect in the Asian and European economies."

US stocks have been on a dizzying roller-coaster ride this week. A deep, broad sell-off on Monday was followed by a bounce on Tuesday as investors snapped up bargain-price shares. But that brief respite gave way to resumed selling on Wednesday.

"What has happened to the markets has increased the probability of the Fed moving 75 but it's not a fait accompli," said Gerald Cohen, senior economist at Merrill Lynch.

The market has been plagued by worries about the slowing US economy, shrinking corporate profits and, more recently, about the fragile state of Japan and other Asian economies and the possibility of a broad global economic downturn. *Reuters*

Japan's slump casts shadow over Asia

SINGAPORE—The need for Japan to pull its anemic economy out of a decade-long slump has taken on an increased urgency for the rest of Asia now the US economy is slowing sharply, analysts say.

A meltdown of the world's second largest economy could be disastrous for Asian countries reliant on Japan as an export market, they say.

Japan is the largest importer in Asia and a collapse could trigger a crisis similar to the 1997 meltdown that paralyzed momentum in Thailand, South Korea and Indonesia and ultimately affected Russia and Brazil, warned Rob Scott of the Washington-based Economic Policy Institute.

"If their (Japan) economy collapses, it will certainly have a negative impact on the region," said Scott.

The recovery from the 1997 crisis has been credited to a then-buoyant US economy hungry for cheap Asian imports, and providing the region with a buffer to the spluttering Japanese economy.

But the US crutch has gone and more than ever Asia needs an urgent reversal of economic fortunes in Japan, economists said.

In addition to being a major regional investor, Japan absorbed about 12 percent of Asian exports last year valued at $158 billion. The US, the largest export destination, took in 22 percent of Asian goods and services valued at $293.3 billion.

"Japan is a bigger risk not so much because the economy is sluggish but rather what the Japanese will do about it," said Gerard Teo, a Singapore-based strategist for Dutch bank ABN Amro's Asian Economics and Markets division. *AFP*

SO THE PUBLIC MAY KNOW THE TRUTH

The Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) has barred **Excellent Essentials International Corporation**, an alleged health products and personal care distributor, from distributing unregistered imported food products.

In his order, BFAD Director William Torres said that Bureau Circular No. 8 requires all imported food products to be validly registered with the BFAD before these products can be sold or offered for sale locally.

Torres said that **Excellent Essentials** clearly violated the circular, and ordered the company to prove why legal action should not be taken against it.

The unregistered products included assorted health drinks.

Excellent Essentials claims to be the exclusive Philippine Distributor of E. Excel International based in the United States. However, legal documents show that **E. Excel International (Philippines), Inc.** is the authorized exclusive distributor of such products worldwide.

EXTRA EXCEL INTERNATIONAL (PHILIPPINES), INC.
24F Rufino Pacific Tower, 6784 Ayala Avenue, Makati City

DAVAO City
64TH ANNIVERSARY

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PANAGHIUSA LIG-ONON, KALAMBUAN IPADAYON
THE CITY THAT DOES NOT REST ON ITS LAURELS

THE CURRENT mood in all sectors in the city is that there is no stopping Davao City on its march to progress.

Mayor Benjamin C. de Guzman, running the affairs of one of the Most Livable Cities in Asia, had embarked on bold programs to ensure that the city government will remain to be financially strong to meet its responsibility to the people .

Giving him support are the Dabawenyos, investors and local business bent on seeing their city march farther to progress.

Mayor Ben's leadership has struck a responsive chord from the sidewalk vendors and the farmers, from the proud owners of new high-rise hotels and buildings and and malls, and huge investors who continue to reshape the economic landscape of the city.

Today Mayor Ben presides over this melting pot of 1,300,000 people of varied regional cultures who trace their roots from Basilan to Tawi-tawi and who has made Davao City their own.

Year 2001 started well for the city with more honors showered on it to the joy of the Dabawenyos.

Today Dabawenyos proudly say that their city :

- made it twice to the Asiaweek list of Most Livable City in Asia (No. 18 in 1999 & No. 17 in 2000)
- made a repeat performance as Most Child Friendly City (1999 & 2000)
- has the Best City Police Office
- named as Greenest & Cleanest City by the Interior Department
- has an annual income of P2 billion, the No. 3 highest for a local government unit throughout the Philippines
- recipient of continuing confidence by local and foreign investors with P12 billion poured into various projects in years 1999 & 2000 alone
- is home to a booming fruits, vegetables and flower industry

For Mayor Ben, however, nothing should be left to chance if Dabawenyos should be assured that their city continue its march to progress and development.

That Dabawenyos should never rest on their laurels, is Mayor Ben's oft-repeated line as he emphasizes that success should not drive them to complacency.

With about 20 awards from national and international bodies and agencies in a span of two years, the Dabawenyo pride is assured a place in a hall of fame for local government units. A treasured honor came from the prestigious Asiaweek Magazine survey which placed Davao City in the top 40 cities in Asia for two straight years. The Asiaweek Quality of Life Index placed Davao City in the No. 18 slot in 1999, and a notch higher, No. 17, in year 2000.

Mayor Ben's administration is responding vigorously to the Dabawenyo support with bold programs to hasten development and ensure a higher quality of life for all.

His 15-point development agenda started at the start of his administration in 1998 is almost complete.

Today, the energetic mayor, whose experience in running the government includes being city administrator and vice mayor, is looking up to another development agenda which he hopes to implement in the next three years after the May elections.

BUSINESS CONFIDENCE. While investors shied away from conflict areas in Southwestern and Central Mindanao, Davao City was busy welcoming investors.

In 1999 & 2000 new investors pumped into the local economy more than P12 billion in new investments. Tourism figures show positive figures with 300,000 tourists coming in to savor unique tourist sites.

PEACE AND ORDER. While a spate of Abu Sayyaf kidnappings and sporadic skirmishes between government forces and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front shattered peace in many areas in Mindanao, the Davao City Police Office last year was voted as the Best City Police Office by the Department of Interior and Local Government.

Last year , the annual crime index has hovered consistently around the 8- percent crime average per hundred thousand, one of the lowest in the country. The figure was among those cited by the Asiaweek last year, when it named the city as the No. 17 Most Livable City in a survey of top 40 Asian cities.

The first two months showed an even more lower statistic. DCPO reports a 6 per cent average, the first in the history of the Davao City Police Office.

DEVELOPMENT AGENDA. Mayor Ben believes the key to progress and development are the infrastructures that strengthen business confidence on the city as a viable investment proposition.

Early on in his administration, he has identified a development agenda that would address not only problems of the common man but as well as demands by investors for the continued growth of the business atmosphere.

FARM-TO-MARKET ROADS. The P400 million farm-to-market road hopes to open 180 hinterland barangays with huge expanses of underdeveloped agricultural lands and enhance Davao City's growing image as a major exporter of fruits,flowers, and vegetables.

URBAN DRAINAGE PROGRAM. A P130-million initial phase of the comprehensive urban drainage program is complete. In the drawing board is a second phase that would involve a bigger fund that would fully address flooding in most parts of the city, which suffers from frequent floods.

SPORTS DOME. A longtime dream of the Dabawenyos, the Davao City Artica Sports Dome will be completed about middle of next year.

Mayor Ben has also released funds for the development of the Elias B. Lopez Sports Complex , a joint undertaking with the University of the Philippines in Mindanao. The 25-hectare site is carved out of the UPMIN campus in Bago Oshiro, Mintal.

DAVAO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. To become operational early next year, the $105 billion airport expansion project will strengthen its trade and tourism ties with countries under the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines/East Asean Growth Area pact, a subregional economic cooperation pact aiming to make the Asean region a key player in world economy.

DAVAO ARTICA SPORTS D

SPORTS Dome.The soon-to-be finished P300 million Davao City Arctica Sports Dome.

ROADS AND BRIDGES. A 20-kilometer coastal road project is plannea from Sta. Ana area to Toril. Eight pedestrian overpasses have been built. Two new bridges at downtown Davao, and three huge flyovers now help ease traffic flow.

A modern traffic management system is being undertaken by the Traffic Management and Control Board based on a study conducted by the UP National Center for Transportation.

SANITARY LANDFILL. A Canadian firm, Celdex Environmental Techologies, has offered to build a P300 million modern sanitary landfill complex under a build-operate-transfer scheme. To rise on a 25-hectare lot in Tibungco, the Celdex proposal is now with the National Economic Development Authority. Mayor Ben along with members of the city council and the Regional Development Council strongly endorsed the project.

DAVAO CITY POLICE OFFICE. The Davao City Police Office not only gets regular financial and logistical supports from the city government. A major ongoing project is the construction of police buildings for all of the city's police precincts this year. The DCPO also has gone hi-tech with the government providing computers for all police precincts, in a joint project with the Davao Light and Power Company which provided softwares.

TOURISM AND INVESTMENT. Tourism continues to stand on solid grounds, despite the bad press that hounded Mindanao at the height of the Abu Sayyaf kidnappings and the sporadic fighting between MILF and government forces in the Cotabato provinces. Industry sources even said the unstable peace and order in other parts of Mindanao may have been a blessing in disguise for Davao City: tourists came because they shied away from other Mindanao areas.

URBAN POOR HOUSING. A continuing program to resettle a growing number homeless urban poor constituents drives the city government to earmark funds for purchase of resettlement areas. The city housing office assists settlers in purchasing relocation sites on top of city-owned resettlement areas such as in Tibungco and Mintal.

UNION CEMENT CORPORATION
greets Dabawenyos on the 64th Araw ng Dabaw Celebration.
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THE MAYOR'S REPORT
UNITY BEHIND DAVAO'S PROGRESS

THE DABAWENYOs are very strong promoters of unity and progress.

These two innate attributes are the moving spirit behind what we and our beloved Davao City have achieved so far.

Panaghiusa Lig-onon, Kalambuan Ipadayon, the theme of the 64th Araw ng Dabaw celebration, is all about people united as one in the pursuit of progress and development.

The Dabawenyos have had to hurdle past trials during our march to the future , and celebrating this year's anniversary of the founding of our city in unity and forward-looking vision comes as a fitting tribute to our tenacity to surmount the obstacles.

Two major events last year and early this year came to deal a serious blow to the political and economic stability of the country.

The economic crisis that bedeviled a shaky nation prior to the change in the national administration that saw the ascendancy of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in January had brought untold miseries to the common man and local governance.

And for a long agonizing year in 2000, Mindanao dominated the international news as the Moro kidnap gang Abu Sayyaf grabbed foreign tourists, pushing to the bottom confidence of investors on the island .

For a while, Dabawenyos feared the crises would have dire effects in the local scene, as its stable peace and order situation faced an acid test and the business climate was dampened by unstable economy.

As happened, however, the Dabawenyos' weathered the storm without a scratch to their peace and the economic viability of their city.

While the rest of the country reeled from the crisis that wracked the administration of deposed President Joseph Estrada, we Dabawenyos went on our merry way and did a repeat performance by picking up another award from the prestigious Asiaweek Magazine as one of 40 Most Livable Cities in Asia. The Asiaweek has placed our beloved city as No. 17 in the list , ahead of major cities Manila and Cebu , making our city as the country's most livable city for the second time.

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MAYOR Ben De Guzman assisting Davao Police chief Wilfredo Garcia and wife Hazel, cut ribbon during the March 10 formal opening of the 64th Araw ng Dabaw

The distinction, along with the various other awards we garnered, should be a prized possession among the Dabawenyos. Making it to the Asiaweek 2000 for the second time (No. 18 in 1999) speaks much of our continuing effort to make our city as a city of man.

The Abu Sayyaf kidnappings also had not made a dent in our tested

image as Mindanao's premier city thanks to our vigilant police and citizenry.

This vigilnnce against violence and those who want to destabilize our peace and order indicates just how peace-loving we Dabawenyos are.

It is not a miracle, however, that Davao City has emerged unscathed from the shockwaves of these crises.

While other local government units in Mindanao frantically dug up from their bags of magic tricks solutions to blunt off the effects on the economy and peace of these crises, we are glad that investors continue to find our city as an investors' haven.

The story behind our march forward is not a big secret.

It is simply the unity and commitment of the Dabawenyos to do their best for our beloved city . In the heart of a Dabawenyo is a treasured survival kit that contains among others: the spirit of unity and oneness and the Dabawenyos' burning resolve, honed by triumphs over various trials and challenges in the past , to push their city forward no matter what.

Adding a vital ingredient to the survival brew are the dedicated men and women running the city government , the business community and the Dabawenyos in general.

In my inaugural address in July 1998, I have committed readiness to pursue an economic vision to ensure the viability of our city.

This vision is spelled out in a 15-point agenda of development. Public support had guided us into realizing most of these projects in the short span of nearly three years under my administration.

Resting on one's laurels however has no room in the Dabawenyo heart.

As we celebrate the 64th Araw ng Dabaw, let us pray that unity and commitment to progress will continue to serve as the sparkplug of our march to the future.

MADAYAW!!!

MESSAGES

MY WARMESt greetings to all the Dabawenyos and our guests on the occasion of the 64th founding anniversary of our beloved Davao City.

This year's Araw ng Dabaw has become more significant for many reasons.

Our collective efforts to improve the quality of life of our people have been acknowledged through numerous awards that continue to be bestowed on our city.

Our valued peace and order situation has remained stable with the continued vigilance of our people, the police and military.

Our progress and development have remained on steady upward direction despite certain factors that dampened the economic climate throughout the country.

Lastly, the Dabawenyos remain as strong and united in the common pursuit to achieve our collective mission to hasten the development of our city.

This year we celebrate the Araw ng Dabaw with the theme, **Panaghiusa Lig-onon, Kalambuan Ipadayon.**

I hope and pray that unity and commitment to progress will continue to be the moving factor in the days ahead for all of us Dabawenyos as we pursue the realization of our dreams and aspirations for our beloved Davao City.

Madayaw !!!

Benjamin C. de Guzman
City Mayor

THE UNITY of the Davawenyos is one again demonstrated as our dear city celebrates its 64th founding anniversary.

The Araw ng Dabaw is always a festive and joyous occasion for the Dabawenyos and this year we express this collective sentiment with a theme focused on their unity in the pursuit of progress .

Panaghiusa Lig-onon, Kalambuan Ipadayon, the Araw celebration theme, sums up the current mood: the Dabawenyos are not about to sleep on their laurels or allow their unity to be threatened.

The Dabawenyos in general, the private sector and other well-meaning citizens have joined hands with the city government to make the 64th Araw a big success.

Our special thanks goes to the Rotary Clubs of Davao City, our co-partner in this important event, for their tireless effort in proving their worth in helping us all they way to make the event a success.

We would like to thank all of them for getting into motion this early, the vision of unity and dedication to progress set forth ahead for us all Dabawenyos by our theme of unity.

Madayaw !!

NESTOR M. LEDESMA City Administrator
Executive Chairman
64th Araw ng Dabaw

Supplement prepared by A.T. Valino, Apple Carriedo and Anabelle Andrin.

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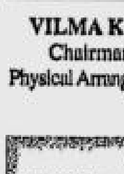
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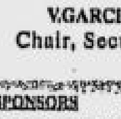
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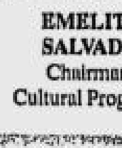
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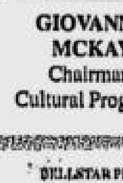
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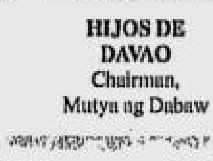
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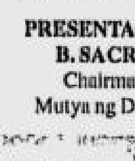
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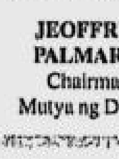
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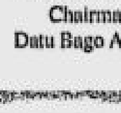
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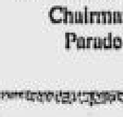
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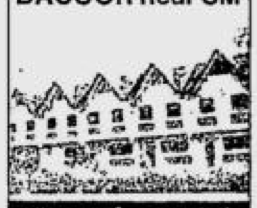

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ELIAS C. CUSI has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs as per Doc No.5; Page No.2; Book No.314; Series of 2001 before Notary Public Santiago R. Reyes of the City of Manila.
(PDI - Mar 2, 9 & 16, 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late AMADO J. DOMINGO, SR. was settled by his heirs through an extrajudicial partition acknowledged before Notary Public Emerico B. Lomibao for and in the City of Manila as Doc. No. 359 on Page 11, Book XXXI, Series of 2001 of his Notarial Register
PDI-March 9, 16 & 23, 2001

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given of the loss of Bureau of Immigration Alien Certificate of Registration No. E076812 and Immigrant Certificate of Residence No. 231264 under the name of MR. LIANG KAI LAI
PDI-Mar. 9,16 & 23, 2001

PERSONAL

NOVENA TO THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS AND SAINT JUDE

May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, blessed, loved, adored and glorified throughout the whole world now and forever. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Pray for us.

St. Jude, worker of miracles, helper for the helpless, pray for us.

Say nine times a day for nine days. Prayer will be answered by the eighth day, it has never failed.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education Culture and Sports
THIRD ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROJECT

INVITATION FOR BIDS

March 12, 2001
Loan No. PH-P184
IFB No. PISU-CO/182001-JBIC

1. The Government of the Philippines through the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) has received a loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) (formerly the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund) in Japanese Yen towards financing the cost of Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for **Supply and Delivery of School Furniture to Selected Public Elementary schools in the Philippines.**
2. DECS Philippines Project Implementation Support Unit for the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply and delivery of school furniture.
   a. School Desk (All Wood) - 15,267 pcs.
   b. Tablet Armchair (All Wood) - 7,901 pcs.
   c. Armchair (Wood & Steel) - 34,534 pcs.
3. For the purpose of this bid, eligible bidders shall be those who have experience in the supply or selling and distribution or delivery of school furniture to public or private elementary schools in remote areas in the Philippines.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and secure the bidding documents at the Pre/Post-Qualifications, Bids and Awards Committee for Foreign Assisted Projects (PBAC-FAP) with office address at 2nd Floor, Rizal Building I, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City starting **March 12, 2001**, or visit the DECS website at http://www.decs.gov.ph.
5. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased upon submission of a written application to the above and payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (PhP 2,000.00).
6. Bids must be delivered to the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building I, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City on or before 10:00 a.m. on **May 2, 2001** and must be accompanied by a security in the form of bank guarantee, irrevocable letter of credit, cashier's or certified check of not less than two percent (2%) of total bid amount.
7. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidder's representatives who choose to attend at 10:00 a.m. on **May 2, 2001**, at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building I, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.
8. Prior to bid opening, a pre-bid conference will be held on **March 26, 2001**, 10:00 a.m. at the venue indicated in paragraph 7.

(Sgd.) **RAMON C. BACANI**
Undersecretary and
Co-Chairman, PBAC-FAPs

(PDI - March 12 & 16, 2001)

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES LOS BAÑOS
College, Laguna

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) invites interested parties to submit sealed bids for the public bidding of the supply, delivery and installation of Laboratory Equipment and Computers.

Interested parties may secure the checklist of pre-qualification requirements from Supply & Property Management Office (SPMO), UPLB, College, Laguna. Pre-qualification documents shall be received by SPMO, UPLB until 4:00 p.m., **March 23, 2001**.

Only pre-qualified bidders shall be allowed to secure bid documents from SPMO, UPLB on **March 27-30, 2001** and participate in the pre-bid conference to be held on **April 2, 2001** at the Supply and Property Management Office, UPLB at 10:00 a.m.

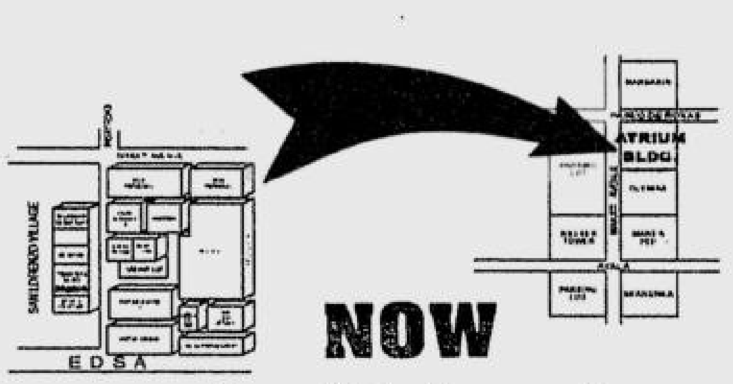
Only pre-qualified bidders shall be allowed to submit separate technical and financial proposals until 1:00 p.m. **April 16, 2001**, the time for opening of sealed bids at the Supply and Property Management Office, UPLB.

The UPLB reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the UPLB. The UPLB likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **DR. TERESITA M. ESPINO**
Chair, PBAC

(PDI--March 16, 2001)

Inquirer's
Makati Branch



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Narra Club launches its summer program

THE Narra Club for Girls gets into the summer groove as it blasts off with a super-cool summer program at their latest club house, located at 109 M. Alvarez Street, Talon 1, Las Piñas.

The sprawling 4-storey building is the new home for this 15-year old club. But though its address has changed, Narra still bears its old charms. Known for its FUN and WORTHWHILE summer offerings, the club seeks to outdo itself this time by offering swimming, underwater hockey and cooking courses, hi-tech science sessions, and music lessons.

The summer program will be from April 16 to May 11, 2001 and is open to all girls from Grade 4 to 4th Year High School.

To be a Narra Club member is easy—all it takes is 250 pesos per month and you have the passport to avail of all these exciting courses*, get togethers, human interest talks, plus free use of the swimming pool, study rooms and libraries.

Registration is now going on. For more information, please contact Mila Casas or Vissia Carillo at telephone number 806-7257 or visit the club at 109 M. Alvarez Street, Talon 1, Las Piñas.

(The Narra Club is committed to the total development of young girls through various non-formal educational activities which provide cultural, professional, human and socio-civic formation.)

*Courses fee not included.

INVITATION TO BID

The Pasig City Government through Pasig City General Hospital with principal office at F. Legaspi Extension, Maybunga, Pasig City hereby invites suppliers to a sealed bidding for various medical, dental, radiology, laboratory, waste management, various drugs and medicines and office supplies for the 1st quarter of 2001.

ACTIVITY	TIME	DATE	PLACE
1. Pre-bid for various Drugs and Medicines	8:30 AM	3/19/01	Conference Hall, PCGH
2. Pre-bid various Medical, Laboratory, Dental, Radiology and Waste Management	10:30 AM	3/19/01	Conference Hall, PCGH
3. Bidding various Medical, Laboratory, Dental, Radiology and Waste Management	8:00 AM	3/27/01	Pasig Livelihood
4. Bidding various Drugs and Medicines	8:00 AM	3/29/01	Pasig Livelihood
5. Bidding various Office Supplies		To be announced (TBA)	

The Pasig City Committee on Award shall award the contract to suppliers with the lowest qualifying bids. It also reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any minor deviation in the bid tender documents which does not affect the substance and validity of the bids and reserves the right to accept such bids most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **REYNALDO C. CASEÑAS**
City General Services Officer

(PDI – March 16, 2001)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

NOTICE OF RE-BIDDING

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be accepting sealed offers for the Sale thru Market Determined Pricing 104,000 MT (2,080,00 BAGS) 10% MOLSO Milled U.S. Rice, Grade No. 2, Four (4%) percent broken maximum at the indicative prices of:

a. Ex-Vessel Php 18.70/kg or 935.00/bag
b. Ex-Pier (FOT) Php 19.00/kg or 950.00/bag
c. Ex-Warehouse Php 20.00/kg or 1,000.00/bag

on **March 23, 2001** at 2:00 PM at the Boardroom, 10th floor, 101 Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City.

A pre-rebidding conference shall be held on **March 21, 2001** at 2:00 PM at the NFA Boardroom. In the pre-auction, interested bidders shall bring the following:

a. Original and xerox copy of NFA license (retailing, wholesaling or ricemilling).
b. Duly notarized authorization from the owner, partner, chairman or president that he or she is authorized to represent the business entity in the pre-auction, auction proper and all activities thereto.

All interested bidders shall submit a bid bond equivalent to 5% of the total bid price in the form of cash, Cashier's Check or Manager's Check from any reputable Metro Manila Bank.

Interested bidders may secure the terms and conditions starting **March 19, 2001** at DMO OCD, 5th floor from 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM. For any inquiries, please call tel. nos. 712-15-72 and 712-17-08.

Bidding documents will be available on **March 21, 2001** to qualified bidders/offerors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00. In case of bidding failure a pre-rebidding/re-bidding shall be conducted on at 2:00 PM at NFA Boardroom on **28** and **30 March 2001**, respectively.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality thereof, and to accept only such bids that are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **ANTHONY R. A. ABAD**
Administrator

(PDI -- March 16, 19 & 20, 2001)

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INQUIRER
TRiViA
By BONG BARRAMEDA

Breaking the bank

The first bankers conducted their business sitting on a bench, usually located in the courtyard of a temple (and it was from just such a temple-bench that Jesus Christ drove the money-changers). A moneylender in medieval Italy worked from a *banca*, a bench or shelf, and this gave us our modern word *bank*. When he was no longer able to continue in business because of a shortage of funds, his bench was broken up and he was referred to as a *bancarotta*, literally 'bench broken.' From this, the word *bankrupt* gradually came to be used for an insolvent person, someone whom a court has declared unable to pay his or her debts. The *rupt* part of the word meant 'broken' in Latin, so when a man is bankrupt his bench is broken.

For the Record. As far as number of branches go, the world's biggest bank is the State Bank of India, with over 13,000 outlets.

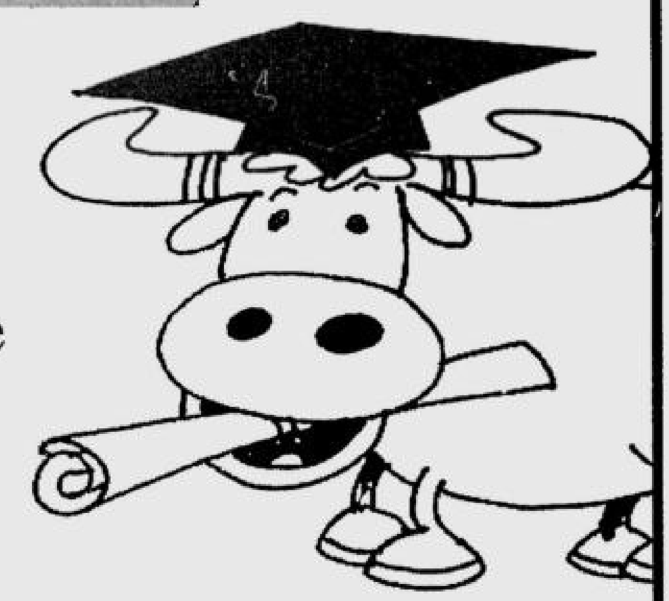
Classified Odd. In the late 19th century, Hetty Green, the so-called "Witch of Wall Street," was considered the richest woman in the world. Her fortune totaled nearly a hundred million dollars. From her father she had inherited six million; the rest she accumulated through a series of brilliant investments in the stock market. But her brilliance in money-making was matched only by her legendary miserliness. For years she wore the same dress. Originally black, it turned green—and then brown—with age. For underwear she wore old newspapers collected from trash baskets in New York's Central Park. Her home was an unheated tenement and her diet consisted of onions, eggs, and dry oatmeal. When her nine-year-old son Edward was run over by a wagon, she refused to call a doctor. She took him instead to free clinics. Because of this neglect, one of the boy's legs had to be amputated.

WORD WATCH

Barat : from the Spanish *barato* or *barata*, 'cheap.'

PDI – March 16, 2001

SUCCESS!



Congratulate your loved ones, or simply tell the entire Philippines that the graduate has finally made it, ready to face a whole new and bright world.

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Ps. 27, 1

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widow of **Dr. Rodrigo E. Salazar**

was born on May 13, 1922. She died on March 14, 2001.

Please remember her in your prayers.

We who are left behind thank God for the time He gave her to us.
We thank you who have been part of her life and ours.

Children:
Joseph and **Renee Llaguno**; **Monsignor Ralph**, **Father Roderick Jr. SVD**;
Rose Marie and **Roberto Clemeña**; **Randolph** and **Lourdes Apostol**;
Robert; **Mary Belle** and **Ferdinand Beluan**; **Mary Rosalind** and **Raoul Zantua**;
Roderick III and **Ma. Lourdes Faller**; **Ronald** and **Loretta Austria**.

Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren:
Chippy and,**Aireen Imperial** and **Diego**; **Eena** and **Melvin Sarayba**;
Happy and **Guilder Bringas** and **Luigi**; and **Boris**;
Lorianne, **Richard**, and **Russell**; **Bernie**, **Brian**, and **Bea**;
Rae Mark, **Rod Ralph**, and **Rik James**; **Madelene** and **Margaret**; **Nicky** and **Rachel**

Sister and Brother-in-law: **Mayor Imelda** and **Rudecindo F. Roces**.

Sisters-in-law: **Carmen B. Crisol**, **Rosario S. Prado**, and **Carolina B. Salazar**.

Wake:
March 14-16, 2001
Capilla de San Francisco, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City,
March 17-19, 2001
2 Marquez St., Legazpi City

Burial:
March 20, 2001
after the 8:00 o'clock a.m. Mass at the St. Gregory the Great Cathedral, Old Albay, Legazpi City.

"Unable are the Loved to die—
For Love is Immortality"
Emily Dickinson

R.I.P.

†

*"...Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."*

MR. BAYANI PALMA SAMONTE

1929 - 2001

of Cabay, Tiaong, Quezon and Baclaran, Parañaque City

*(SK 4th Degree Knights of Columbus St. Rita de Casia Chapter,
and Active Member of the Parañaque Manpower Council)*

Passed away peacefully in the grace of Christ on the 10th of March 2001 in Hercules, California, USA. His body will be flown in on Thursday, 15th of March 2001 and will be brought to the Holy Trinity Chapels, Dr. A. Santos Avenue, Sucat, Parañaque City.

He is survived by his wife **Trinidad Espina del Pilar**; children **Antonio, Norma S. Emelia, Bernardo, Lydia, Flora**, and **Evelyn "Vien" S. Cortes**; son-in-law **Claro Fausto V. Cortes IV**; grandchildren **Angeline, Joanna, Aldwin, Maricar, Clarissa, Catrina** and **Gheanna**.

We call on the faithful to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment will be on Sunday, March 18, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park after the 2:00 PM Mass.

Our Dearly Beloved

Eugenio C. Fuerte

of Las Piñas City

*Peacefully joined our Lord on February 6, 2001
at the age of 70 in Fremont, Alameda, California.*

His bereaved wife **Rosalina V. Fajardo**; children and in-laws **Danny** and **Ginnie**, **Marie** and **Mon**, **Vicky** and **Jun**, **Vangie** and **Allan**; grandchildren, brothers, sisters, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for his eternal repose.

His cremated remains lie in state at the family residence at 915 San Jose Street, Ilaya, Las Piñas City.

Interment will be on Sunday, March 18, 2001 at 2:30 p.m. at the Las Piñas Catholic Cemetery.

Message of Thanks

*"Happy are those who have died in the Lord;
let them rest from their labors for their good deeds go with them."*
Rev. 14:13

Our Dearly Beloved

Dr. Jazmine N. Avanceña

of Cagayan de Oro City

Peacefully joined our Lord on March 12, 2001 at the age of 58.

Her loving sisters Mrs. Lirio A. Albay and Dr. Camilla Habacon; brothers-in-law Engr. Ramon C. Albay and Col. Gabriel Habacon; nieces Lira Hyacinth Albay, Camille Lyriza Habacon, nephews Gabriel Stephen Habacon, Paul Ernest Habacon, relatives and friends wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and who in countless ways, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

ALBERT CARMELO CATINDIG, Ph. D.

**Professor; Director of Learning Resource Center,
Leyte Normal University, Tacloban City**

Peacefully joined his Creator on March 9, 2001 at the age of 39.

His beloved wife **Maria Fe**; mother **Espedita**; sisters **Marilou, Irene, Odith** and **Louise**; brothers-in-law **Joey, Romy**, and **Noel**; nephews and nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Ascension Funeral Chapel, Ascension Avenue, Lagro, Novaliches, Quezon City.

Interment will be at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City on Saturday, March 17, 2001 after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

Our Dearly Beloved

RICARDO SORIANO REINOSO SR.

Peacefully joined our Lord on March 14, 2001 at the age of 80

His loving wife MARY P.E.T. (Sister Analyst); children RICARDO JR. and MARY, together with sisters ANITA REINOSO ISBERTO, and AURORA REINOSO ALMENDRAL, and in laws AMPARO REINOSO, COL. LEANDRO ISBERTO, ATTY. ARTEMIO ALMENDRAL, & CARMEN REINOSO nieces and nephews, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul

His remains lie in state at RIZAL FUNERAL HOMES, INC., FLORISSANT CHAPEL, 438 Cementina St., Pasay City

Interment will be on Saturday, March 17, 2001 at Manila South Cemetery, Vito Cruz Extension, Makati City, at 2:00 p.m.

RIZALINA S. CAOILE

*Peacefully joined our Creator
on March 13, 2001 at the age of 85.*

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Financial . . .

(From page B16)

One is an "annual automatic adjustment" in line with inflation—a decline in the value of money in relation to the goods and services it will buy. The MWSS Regulatory Office uses the consumer price index—or cost of living, the amount of money needed to purchase goods and services required to maintain a certain standard of living—to determine how much increase to warrant.

Regulators may also warrant a water rates hike due to "extraordinary events," like a peso depreciation that may jack up dollar-denominated debts of the MWSS' two concessionaires.

"Force majeure"—an unforeseeable course of events excusing a person from the fulfillment of a contract—is also a valid reason for a water rates increase. Other grounds include a sudden change in government policies, also unforeseen, or a breach of contract by either the MWSS or its concessionaires.

Not enough

At the start of the year, the MWSS Regulatory Office and board of trustees allowed Manila Water and Maynilad to raise, on account of inflation and the peso's depreciation, their basic water charges by 19 centavos and 45 centavos per cubic meter, respectively.

The adjustments were lower than what Manila Water and Maynilad sought, which were 23 centavos and P1.45 per cubic meter, respectively.

"This is the only rate adjustment that we have allowed them to have because their original rate petitions are bloated. They want to recover their incurred losses for currency fluctuations immediately. But it is stipulated in the contract that they should recover it within 25 years," the MWSS' chief regulator, Rex Tantiongco, told the INQUIRER.

Apart from getting an increase of 23 centavos per cubic meter, Manila Water also got a conditional authority to raise its rates by 18 centavos per cubic meter. This adjustment still hangs because it is now the subject of a case filed with the Court of Appeals.

Tantiongco stressed that the MWSS Regulatory Office gave Manila Water an 18-centavo-per-cubic-meter provisional increase on the condition that the company provide a system to refund customers should the high court rule against it.

"In the meantime, we allowed them to increase their water charges because our computation showed that this 18-centavos-per-cubic-meter increase would be equivalent to P1.80 per cubic meter if the courts decide on it two years from now," he explained. " This would be a greater burden for consumers."

The 18-centavo increase was the recommendation of an arbitration court formed to act on an appeal filed by Manila Water in 1998, when it was allowed only a 4-centavo increase. The MWSS Regulatory Office has challenged the arbitration court's decision before the Court of Appeals.

Rate re-basing

Another adjustment mechanism is known as "rate re-basing," which will take effect next year. This is the chance for Manila Water and Maynilad to pass on to consumers some operating, capital maintenance and investment expenditures. These expenditures may include "Philippine business taxes and payments corresponding to debt services" on $800 million in MWSS debts absorbed by the concessionaires and new loans over the last five years.

With a rate re-basing mechanism, a fixed fee will appear on the water bills of Manila Water and Maynilad customers to account for debt-related and other extra operating expenses.

Maynilad's plight

Officials of Manila Water and Maynilad are saying that instead of a fixed fee, the MWSS Regulatory Office should come up with a mechanism that will allow the concessionaires to automatically adjust their rates in line with the peso's movement against the dollar.

In a news statement, Maynilad said it needed such a mechanism to be able to continue delivering cheap and clean water to its franchise area and address a longstanding water crisis.

Maynilad chair Oscar Lopez said the so-called auto-Cera—the same mechanism that allows power and telephone companies to cover foreign exchange losses and continue their service uninterrupted—was critical to his company's survival.

Without an "auto-Cera," Lopez said Maynilad's revenues would be so eaten up by the devaluation of the peso, leaving nothing to lay new pipes and fix old ones.

He said the current all-in cost of Maynilad water to the average consumer was only P9 per cubic meter, compared with around P150 for those in Parañaque who had been buying tankered water for years.

He explained that under its concession agreement, Maynilad assumed 90 percent of the MWSS' foreign loans worth $800 million. At that time, in 1997 when the peso was worth 26 to a dollar, this was equivalent to only P20 billion.

"Now, it is worth almost P40 billion because of the peso devaluation, and Maynilad is earning in pesos, not dollars," he said.

This virtually doubled the single biggest expense of Maynilad. Meanwhile, revenues shrank because of natural and man-made causes: the El Niño; the delay in the completion of the Umiray water project and the 300-MLD (million liter per day) bulk water project; and Maynilad's discovery that its pipe network was not only 2,500 kilometers long as MWSS had warranted but 4,000 kilometers.

"So we had little water to sell and earn from and yet so much to pay. We also have to contend with a near-doubling of our pipes. This means more water leaks and again no revenues, and additional money to plug its leaks and replace pipes," he added.

Lopez said Maynilad had tried to work out the problem on their own and invested P2 billion more than they had committed just to continue paying MWSS the $800 million on time and still lay pipes and improve water service.

In fact, he said, the company had to divert P2.3 billion toward paying the bloated MWSS loans that should have been spent on water service to debt service.

But the peso's fall from 26 to 56 to a dollar was "catastrophic" in magnitude that Maynilad or any other concessionaire would really need the auto-Cera to survive, he said.

Indecisive

Maynilad lamented that although regulators had agreed, in principle, with the need for an auto-Cera, they had been slow in taking it to the next level.

"The board of trustees had even planned to toss the final approval to the President and the Cabinet, which to us is very disadvantageous," Maynilad president Rafael Alunan III said.

He said unless an auto-Cera is approved, Maynilad may just as well return its service contract to the government.

"They have acted very indecisively," Alunan said. *(To be continued)*

Gov't sticks to economic targets

By CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE MACAPAGAL administration said yesterday it would stick to its economic growth and inflation targets this year despite a less optimistic forecast from the International Monetary Fund.

In a news briefing, Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said he was assured by Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas that growth in gross domestic product—the sum of all goods and services produced within the country's boundaries—would range from 3.8 percent to 4.2 percent by year's end.

Inflation—a decline in the value of money in relation to the goods and services it will buy—would come in at between 6 percent and 7 percent, Romulo said.

The IMF said earlier the economic outlook for the Philippines improved considerably with the change in the administration, but that it was still projecting a slower economic growth and higher inflation this year.

It said future progress "will depend on improving the tax system, the strength of external demand and the path of world oil prices."

In a report following its last consultation with the government on March 1, the executive board of the IMF estimated a 3.3-percent growth in GDP, slightly below the government projection. The Fund also projected inflation to peak at 8 percent by end-June. Last year's GDP growth was placed at 3.9 percent while inflation averaged at 4.4 percent.

The Philippines is set to enter a two-year post-monitoring arrangement with the IMF next month with negotiators scheduled to arrive for their first review of the country's economic performance on March 28.

It follows the country's exit from a standby loan arrangement late last year, having failed to draw down the last tranche after missing agreed economic targets. The executive board report said the latter part of 2000 was marked by a political crisis surrounding the presidency of Joseph Estrada, culminating in his ouster amidst a wave of public protests on Jan. 20.

Since then, it said that the financial markets had largely calmed, the central bank had lowered its key overnight interest rates to below pre-crisis levels, and surveys show an improvement in business and consumer confidence.

IMF resident representative to the Philippines Sean Nolan said the Fund was less bullish on the recovery of demand and believed that the "wait-and-see" attitude of investors and consumers would remain longer than expected.

The IMF's executive board said a number of key steps need to be taken to improve the country's economic health.

Foremost is the restoration of fiscal discipline with the adoption of a comprehensive medium-term fiscal program aimed at reversing the fiscal deterioration seen in recent years.

The IMF expressed concern on the government's ability to contain the budget deficit after the gap last year ballooned to P136.11 billion last year, more than double the original target of P62.5 billion, with the blowout largely attributed to woeful tax collection.

This year the government is projecting a deficit of P145 billion.

To improve the situation, the IMF welcomed government plans to rationalize and reduce tax incentives and exemptions.

At the same time it noted that while urgent steps were needed to trim the deficit, the government needed to set reduction targets that could be realistically met.

The IMF also endorsed the central bank's plan to formally adopt inflation targeting in the middle of this year although some of the executive board directors found this timetable ambitious. *With a report from Reuters*

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BUSINESS

BAD LOANS AGENCY

Bonds to fund AMC

By Clarissa S. Batino

BANKS have proposed to issue over P200 billion in bonds to set up an agency that will absorb bad bank loans as part of an effort to restructure the country's financial system to spur economic growth.

"Banks have proposed to issue bonds payable in many years. The proceeds of these could be used to bankroll the establishment of this asset management company," Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said in a news briefing yesterday.

The cash-rich, state-run Social Security System is preparing the groundwork to set up the agency, which has won initial support from President Macapagal-Arroyo and top finance officials.

"Basically, it is a systemic solution to the problem of bad loans and under capitalization in the Philippine financial system," SSS chair Vitaliano Nañagas said.

Following the 1997 financial crisis that plunged Southeast Asia into recession, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand set up agencies to buy back non-performing loans of banks or other financial assets gone sour.

Nañagas said the Philippine agency would not be a carbon copy of its regional counterparts and would have "its own local flavor."

The Philippines was among the least hit by the financial crisis, but non-performing loans remained a headache for authorities, who also had to contend with under-capitalized financial institutions.

About 15 percent of the total loan portfolio of the country's banks is deemed non-performing.

Setting up an agency to tackle such loans was "urgent for the Philippines, which is why we are rushing the presentation," Nañagas said ahead of submitting the framework of the proposed agency to the Macapagal administration and the central bank.

With a report from AFP

Financial taps running dry

By Christine A. Gaylican

(Third of a series)

SPECIAL REPORT

WHEN Manila Water Co. Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. clinched a $7.5-billion water services agreement with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, money was expected to flow like tap water for these two companies. They were, after all, given a virtual duopoly over water distribution in the country's biggest region.

To get the contract, however, Manila Water and Maynilad agreed to assume over $800 million that the MWSS owed and to cut water rates to a third of the rates charged by the government. It seemed like a fair deal. The peso was then trading at 26 to a dollar.

Four years later, neither Manila Water nor Maynilad have made a single centavo from their "deal of the decade" with the MWSS. Maynilad is already thinking of ending its contract with the MWSS to stem losses that are spilling over to its parent firm, Benpres Holdings Corp.

The biggest problem of the two concessionaires is the peso's steep dive, which has nearly doubled their debts. They are now asking for an increase in their rates but because of the politically sensitive nature of water as a commodity, government regulators are procrastinating.

Reasons to hike

The MWSS Regulatory Office may allow water rates to increase for a number of reasons.

FINANCIAL/ B15

Retailers see 7% sales hike by year's end

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

LOCAL retailers said yesterday retail sales should improve by 7 percent this year on the back of improving consumer confidence.

Philippine Franchise Association president Manuel Siggaoat said retail sales have surprisingly been climbing since November last year despite a political crisis sparked by then President Estrada's impeachment trial and safety concerns due to a bombing scare in Metro Manila.

"Retailers were pleasantly surprised about the upturn in retail spending. There is still economic growth, and this is reflected in higher consumer spending," Siggaoat said.

He noted that the SM group of companies, the country's No. 1 retailer, posted remarkable sales in the first two months of the year, which its executives described as one of their highest in years.

"Most retailers have reported a robust 15-percent growth in the first two months this year," Siggaoat said.

He attributed the sector's rebound to a resilient economic growth and sustained inflow of remittances from overseas Filipino workers.

Siggaoat said the May elections should further boost spending on food, clothing and footwear this year.

PFA chair Samie Lim said the resurgent retail sector also sparked renewed interest in the franchise industry.

In the last six years, PFA has expanded from 15 to 500 franchise concepts.

Lim said demand for franchising would pick up this year, especially with the inception of financing programs for franchisees.

Original winner to get Sual contract

By Ronnel W. domingo

THE NATIONAL Power Corp. is set to award the controversial P800-million coal supply contract for the 1,200-megawatt Sual power plant to the original winning bidder.

Napocor president Jesus Alcordo ordered last month a review of Napocor's contracts after the losing bidder in the Sual auction complained that the contract was approved through negotiations and not through a competitive tender and that the approved coal supply was of inferior quality.

"We will recommend to go ahead with those contracts," Alcordo said.

Alcordo cited an executive order that former President Fidel Ramos signed, empowering Napocor officials to negotiate fuel supply contracts even without a competitive tender or after one tender for a fuel contract has failed.

He said the presidential order aims to ensure the stability of supply of the government's generating plants and those of independent power producers.

Napocor operates four coal-fired power plants in Batangas and Pangasinan.

"Coal prices are going up. If you look at the coal price under the contracts and the prices now, we have no choice but to award the contracts," Alcordo said.

The awarding of the Sual coal supply contract will complete Napocor's coal procurement for 2001.

Indonesian firm PT Indomico's winning cargo and freight bid price was $35.1375 per metric ton for about 65,000 metric tons. It won over PT Kaltim Prima, also Indonesian, which bid $0.012 per metric ton higher.

Islacom reports 150% increase in net losses

By Anthony O. Alcantara

ISLA Communications Inc. said Wednesday it incurred P6.36 billion in net losses in 2000, up 150 percent from its losses the previous year, as a result of depreciation expenses, provisions for bad debts and write-offs of fixed assets.

Islacom chief financial officer Gil Genio said Islacom's bottom line should improve with the completion of its acquisition by Globe Telecom Inc.

"By next month, both companies will be operationally integrated. A reduction in capital expenditure of $125 million is estimated over the next 18 months. This capex synergy estimate is based only on the current Phase 8 expansion program of Globe," Genio said.

Islacom reported that its net revenues fell from P2.41 billion in 1999 to P1.91 billion last year as it lost over 75,000 subscribers.

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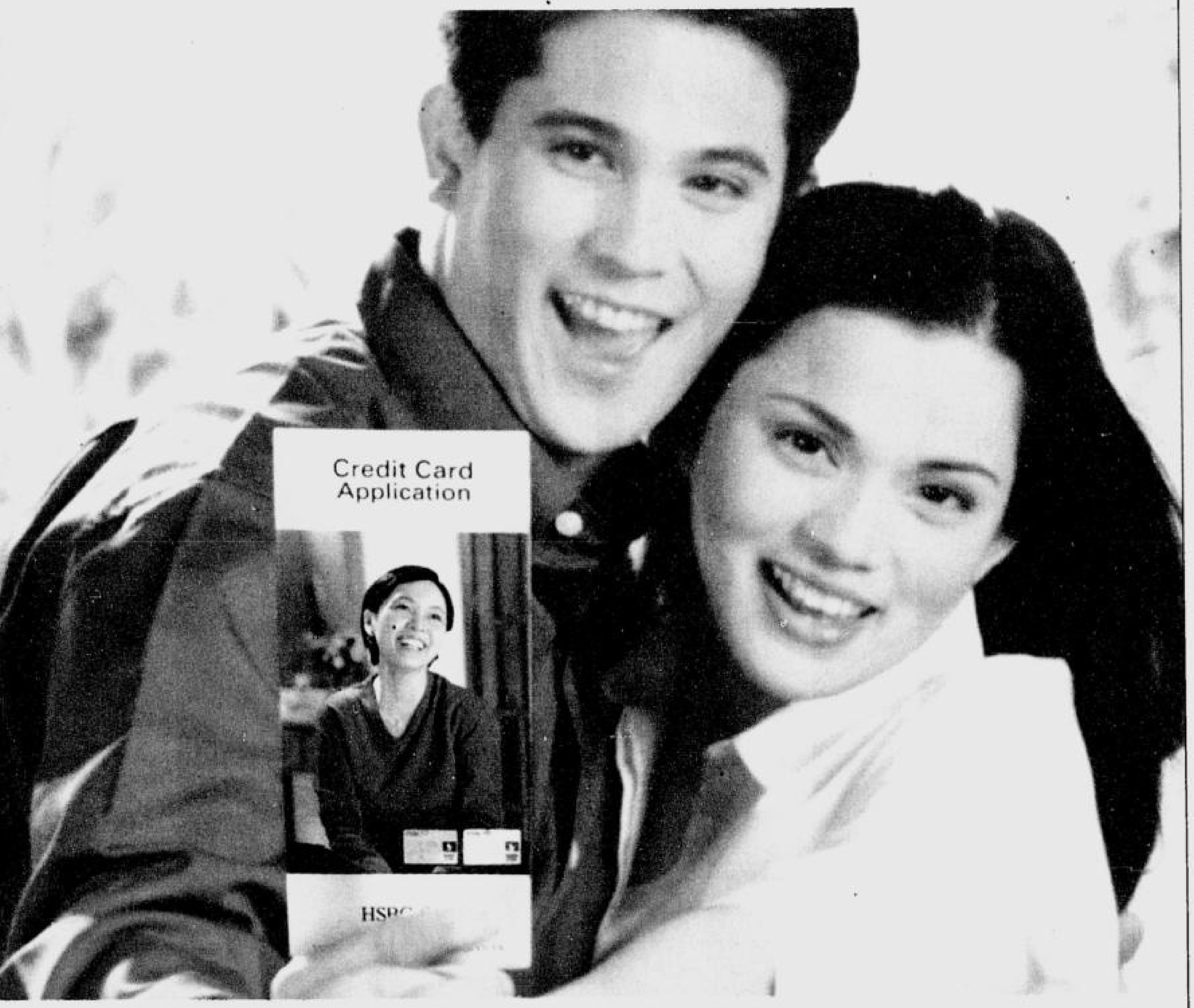

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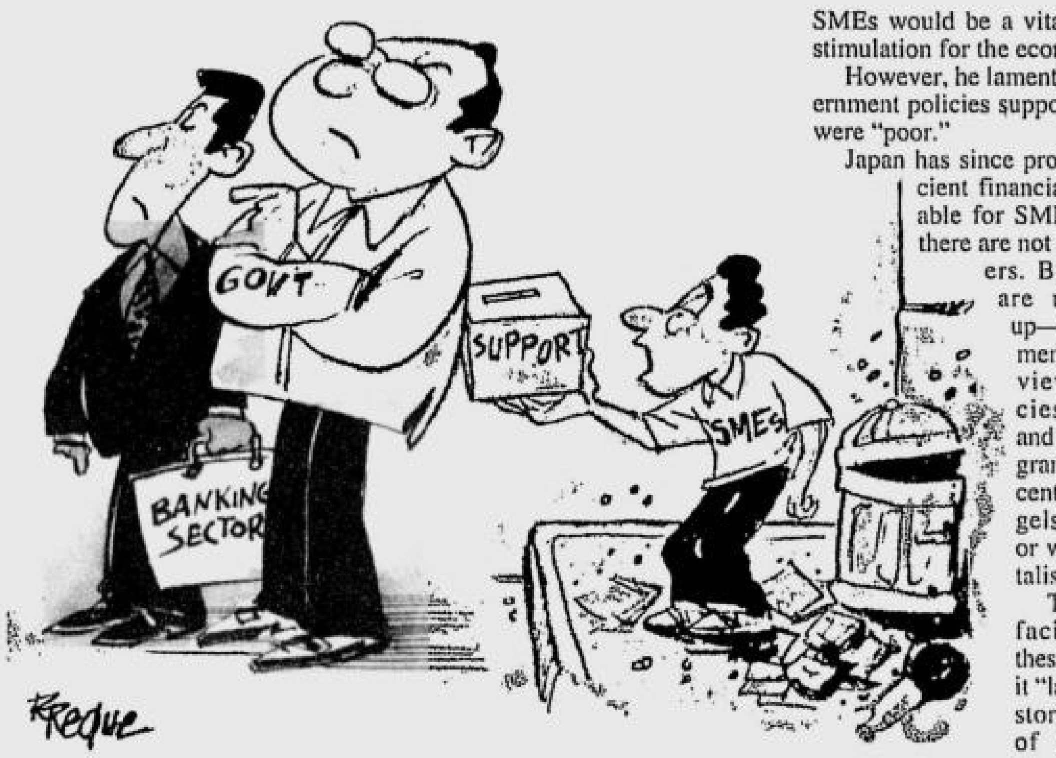
RICH AND POOR NATIONS AGREE

SMEs the key to economic growth

BY CESAR M. ESPINO



JAPAN develops small and medium enterprises to preserve the economy. New Zealand and Canada build on the strength of their SME-led economies and Singapore rolls out the red carpet for new ventures.

As for the Philippines, eager Filipino entrepreneurs can only wish that their government could see what the rest of the industrialized world does.

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation tries to fill the void in the Philippines and other countries by encouraging entrepreneurship among member-countries as a strategy to ensure long-term economic growth.

Apec recently gathered representatives of member-countries to a two-day conference in Manila to share notes on their experiences—or lack of it—in SME (small and medium enterprise) development.

Dubbed the Apec Human Resources Development for Venture Business Project, the conference focused on the need for government intervention in order to help small and medium enterprises grow.

The conference was held in cooperation with the Nihon University, Institute for International Studies and Training and the Asian Institute of Management.

Takato Ojimi, senior adviser to the Institute for International Studies and Training and formerly with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, said that in the '90s Japan had more closures of companies than start-ups and the government realized that SMEs would be a vital source of stimulation for the economy.

However, he lamented that government policies supporting SMEs were "poor."

Japan has since provided sufficient financial aid available for SMEs although there are not enough takers. But officials are not giving up—the government is now reviewing policies on loans and looking into granting tax incentives to "angels" of SMEs or venture capitalists.

The problem facing Japan these days is that it "lacks success stories because of the small number of entrepreneurs," says Ojimi.

He stressed the need for new venture businesses to create new markets for new goods and services. "The fate of the Japanese economy depends on start-ups and entrepreneurs," he said.

"Expanded markets provide explosive economics," Ojimi said.

Culture of entrepreneurship in New Zealand

Nigel Haworth of New Zealand's Department of International Business, described his country as a "micro-enterprise society."

He cited the following figures in New Zealand, a country with a small population of some 3.9 million:

- 92 percent or some 208,000 of the enterprises in New Zealand employ nine or less persons.
- 1,234 enterprises have more than 100 employees each; and
- Over 100 enterprises employ 528,000 of the total workforce of 1.3 million.

He said that the early beginnings of New Zealand—the settlers and indigenous people and the limitations of resource-based production—brought about a culture of entrepreneurship that upheld personal independence and enterprise production.

Haworth said New Zealand has involved the schools in the development of entrepreneurs, as one of the key success factors of New Zealand's SME economy, believing that "knowledge is the key to competitiveness."

New Zealand considers itself as a business project faced with the challenges of further promoting entrepreneurship, upgrading entrepreneurial initiatives and providing adequate support systems.

Charles Barrett, vice president of the Conference Board of Canada, said the government has acknowledged the importance of entrepreneurs in its society and has launched programs to promote entrepreneurship. It set up the Business Development Bank way back in the '40s to finance start-ups.

"Entrepreneurship development is the process of increasing the supply of capable entrepreneurs within an economy," Barret said. He added that the long-term objective of entrepreneurship development was to create a more supportive entrepreneurship climate, which would accelerate the rate of business start-ups.

Canada's entrepreneurship development strategy targets as "future entrepreneurs" the women.

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YOUR CHOICE NOT TO BE BALD

Making big money by giving e-mail addresses for free

By Dennis M. Arroyo

WHILE many Internet companies have crumbled because of lost revenues despite the hype, Edsamail Philippines Inc. is one of a handful of local Internet firms that have been able to survive the burst of the e-commerce bubble.

It was launched only a year ago but its managers claim they now have a substantial subscriber base mainly through the come-on of free software and Internet access, thus, solving the problem of high costs that have barred more Filipinos from hooking up to the world wide web.

MARKETING STRATEGY

Ma. Margarita Torres, Edsamail general manager, says in an interview that the company decided to give away free e-mail access as its market surveys show that e-mail is still the killer application in the Philippines and cost is still a barrier to Internet connectivity.

"By addressing these two points, Edsamail's product model had a high rate of success in getting a large subscriber base. We are leveraging that subscriber base through advertising, the key in generating revenue," Torres explains.

Torres says e-mail advertising is more effective and more cost efficient compared to advertising through banner ads of ordinary websites. Companies can also develop a better relationship with customers through e-mail since there is one-to-one correspondence.

"Advertisers see that we are the perfect channel for permission marketing to build a database and start a relationship with their customers. Advertisers have become very creative and demanding when it comes to implementing Internet strategies," Torres says.

Permission marketing refers to the practice where subscribers who hook up to the Internet will get information from companies. In the case of Edsamail, it practices permission marketing through mailing lists. It secures the permission of its subscriber to receive content on subjects of interest.

"We build a database for particular content like cooking recipes. Only subscribers who sign in will receive e-mail with the particular content they prefer.

TORRES

We also did a mailing list for the impeachment update and we will probably have one for the coming elections as well," Torres says.

Pond's, one of Edsamail's major advertisers, practices permission marketing with Edsamail by offering free products to subscribers who give information on things such as skin type.

"This allows Pond's to build a database and continue to send e-mail content about skin care to those who gave their permission," Torres says.

Torres says Edsamail plans to offer subscribers more products this year such as Internet cards and other e-mail services and to expand to other countries in Asia.

Edsamail has already issued a new version of its free e-mail CD which has new features including a personalized e-mail address, change of password, save draft messages and online shopping through myAyala.com

Edsamail is owned by a group of investors that include iAyala, the Internet arm of the Ayala group, the Yuchengco group of companies, Hambrecht and Quist, Nomura-Jafco, Walden International, Evoserve and New Era.

Advertisers, on the other hand, include Unilever, Bank of the Philippine Islands, Sara Lee, W. Brown, Smithkline Beecham, Bankard, Union Bank, IBM, Microsoft, Philips and MyAyala.

"Advertisers have been receptive to use because of the large subscriber base, wider reach and the guaranteed impressions we offer. Since we offer not only e-mail but dial-up access, advertisers see that placing a banner ad in Edsamail will be more effective," Torres says.

SMEs the key to economic growth

(From page C1)

youth and corporate employees, and existing entrepreneurs. The government is partnering with business support organizations, educational institutions and educators, the media, corporations and the public at large, in its ED strategy.

Like other countries, access to financing is a perennial issue in Canada. But while there is a perceived lack of availability of SME financing in the early '90s, the situation has significantly improved.

There is now a wide variety of sources for SME financing, although Barrett cited "gaps" that still remain.

Singapore seemed to have the clearest vision for SME development, embodied in its SME21, a 10-year strategic plan to build up the competitiveness of its SMEs.

Singapore's SMEs number slightly over 100,000, or 92 percent of total establishments—employing 51 percent of the work force, but generating only 34 percent of total value added.

SME21 outlined its goals as follows:

1. To double the productivity of the retail sector from S$28,000 to S$56,000.
2. To triple local SMEs with sales turnover of S$10 million and above from 2,000 to 6,000.
3. To quadruple the number of SMEs with e-commerce transactions from 8,000 to 32,000.

Not enough takers

But while Singapore has virtually laid out the red carpet for entrepreneurs with enviable SME support, such as financing, financial and technical consultancy, business matching assistance, training and other unprecedented incentives, they are faced with the problem of a weak entrepreneurial culture among Singaporeans.

Ning de Guzman, principal consultant of De Guzman Associates who is based in Singapore, attributed such attitude by Singaporeans to a fear of leaving their "comfort zones" as most are gainfully employed.

In contrast, Filipino entrepreneurs are longing for more government support. Entrepreneurship students of AIM who attended the forum took the occasion to raise concerns on the local business environment.

Tingzi Torres of Arlee's Bakeshop, a student of AIM's Master in Entrepreneurship program, expressed surprise at the extent of government support that other countries were extending to would-be entrepreneurs, especially Singapore.

Jun Arquiza of Microcontrol Design Technology decried that concerned government agencies were "contradicting each other" specifically on tax incentives for SMEs.

Jaime Garchitorena of SCI said he hoped the government would see the value of entrepreneurship development the way industrialized countries do.

During the open forum, New Zealand's Haworth stressed the importance of government intervention among Apec member countries to insure the development of SMEs.

President Macapagal-Arroyo acknowledges that there is a lack of support on the part of the banking sector for the development of entrepreneurship.

In her keynote speech delivered by National Development Co. head Ofelia V. Bulaong, President Macapagal said that while banks were required to lend 6 percent and 2 percent of their loan portfolio for small- and medium-sized enterprises respectively, the banks circumvent this rule via exemptions such as dollar deposits or purchase of notes.

"There is only paper support for the SME sector," Ms Macapagal said.

Interest on long-term bonds: exempt or not?

By Antonette C. Tionko
SGV & Co.

TAX-FILES

FEW of us have excess cash these days. But to those who do, it is important to know which investments will yield the highest returns. Do we just put our money in the banks? Do we invest in government securities? In corporate bonds?

One thing though is sure, the longer we hold on to our cash, the more beneficial it is for us, because of new tax laws such as the Tax Reform Act of 1997 that aim to encourage cash savings in the Philippines.

Generally, interest on any currency bank deposit and yield or monetary benefit from deposit substitutes and from trust funds and similar arrangement, is subject to a final withholding tax of 20 percent.

The tax can be waived, however, if the interest arises out of a long-term deposit or investment.

Long-term deposits or investment certificates (LTDIC) refer to certificates of time deposit or investments in savings, common or individual trust funds, deposit substitutes, investment management accounts and other investments with a maturity of at least five years.

Banks issue these LTDICs in accordance with provisions set by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), and in denominations of P10,000 or other prescribed denominations. Assuming an individual pre-terminates his LTDIC before the fifth year, he does not automatically lose the exemption from the 20-percent tax. Instead, his interest income will be taxed depending on the length of time he held the LTDIC.

If his holding period is from four to five years, the tax rate is 5 percent and 12 percent if the money was invested for at least three years.

The full 20-percent tax will be assessed only if the LTDIC is held for less than three years.

While individuals get a clear tax break on their interest income from LTDICs, there is no equivalent break for corporations. What corporations (and individuals as well) may look into are investments in long-term debt instruments.

In this connection, Section 32(B)(7)(g) of the Tax Code provides that: "Gains realized from the sale or exchange or retirement of bonds, debentures or other certificates of indebtedness with a maturity of more than five years" shall be exempt from income tax. What exactly is meant by the term "gains" in the provision? Does it refer to interest from a debt instrument? This appears to be the position of the commissioner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue as may be gathered from BIR Ruling No. 166-99, dated Oct. 25, 1999.

In this ruling, Co. X, a domestic life insurance company had certain investments in long-term debt securities such as bonds, debentures certificates of indebtedness, and government securities such as treasury bills and Central Bank Certificates of Indebtedness (CBCIs) with maturities of more than five years.

The interest earned by Co. X on the long-term investments were being subject to the 20-percent final withholding tax imposed on interest or yield from deposit substitutes.

Co. X said the Tax Code provided that gains from sale, exchange or retirement of these instruments (which are exempt from income tax) include interest from such investments.

It argued that if the provision was meant to encourage investment in long-term debt securities, then the term "sale" should be construed to refer not only to subsequent transfer of an instrument but also to its origination and issuance.

Thus, interest income, whether discounted or added on, which is the basis of the gains from these instruments, should also be exempt from tax.

In sustaining the Co. X's position, the BIR ruled that the intent of Section 32(B)(7)(g) is to exclude interest income, yield or gain from the gross income if the bonds, debentures or the certificate of indebtedness have maturity of more than five years.

The ruling states that interest income or yield earned from sale of long-term bonds, whether discounted or added on, should be considered in determining the gain, since the value of long-term securities is determined by the interest or yield that such securities pay, such that a low-interest earning bond cannot be sold for a higher price.

The income tax on gains is levied on the difference between the sale price and the original purchase price, not the difference between the sale price and the market value on the stated date.

Moreover, the term "sale" is not limited to the subsequent transfer of the instrument but includes its origination and issuance. Thus, from the time of its issuance, we should consider the "income" which is the actual amount coming to a person within a specified time, whether as payment for services, interest, or profit from investment.

Its usual synonyms are gain, profit and revenue. Accordingly, interest income or yield or gain from the sale of bonds, debentures and certificates of indebtedness with maturities of more than five years are excluded from gross income in accordance with Section 32(B)(7)(g) of the Tax Code.

Pursuant to this provision, the Bureau of Treasury (BTr), in a letter dated Jan. 6, 2000, sought clarification from the BIR on whether it should stop withholding the 20-percent tax on interest paid on its bonds.

The commissioner of the BIR, in BIR Ruling No. 016-2000 dated Jan. 7, 2000, reiterated its position that interest on bonds with maturity of more than five years is exempt from income tax. This includes interest coupon or profit from the principal.

Soon after the issuance of BIR Ruling No. 016-2000, the BTr again requested confirmation of the commissioner's earlier rulings.

The BTr said in its letter to the BIR that it was of the opinion that interest earned from government securities is not synonymous to "gains" contemplated in Section 32(B)(7)(g), since a bond issued by the BTr has a fixed rate of interest and earns fixed income.

The section, the BTr said, contemplates gains from sale, exchange or retirement of bonds. In other words, it is a gain from the trading of bonds. Interest earned from the issuance of bonds by the BTr to investors is passive income, inasmuch as it has a fixed rate of interest. The BTr proceeded to illustrate its point as follows:

Face Value of Bond	P10M
Term	7 years
Coupon Rate	14.5%

If the investor holds on to his bond (from issuance) until maturity, his gross interest income is P1.45 million per annum.

If the investor sells his bond 21 days after issuance and the current market rate is 13.993 percent, his trading gain is P218,126.22 (Face Value x Current Market Rate) and his accrued income is P84,583.33 (Face Value x Coupon Rate x 21 days/360 days).

If the investor sells his bond 21 days after issuance and the current market rate is 14.70 percent, his trading loss is P87,854.84 and his accrued income is P84,583.33.

The BTr contends that the trading gain referred to in No. 2 is the gain which should be exempt under Section 32(b)(7)(g) and the accrued income in Nos. 2 and 3 and the Gross Interest Income in number one, are the interest income from the issuance of bonds which should be subject to 20 percent final withholding tax.

It is notable that the BTr's example involves a bond with a coupon, or one that pays a fixed amount of interest at specific dates. This type of bond should be distinguished from one that is issued at a discount.

For instance, a corporate borrower issues a bond with a maturity of five years and one day for P75. A bondholder is entitled to no interest payments during the term, but on redemption or retirement of the bond at its maturity, the holder gets P100.

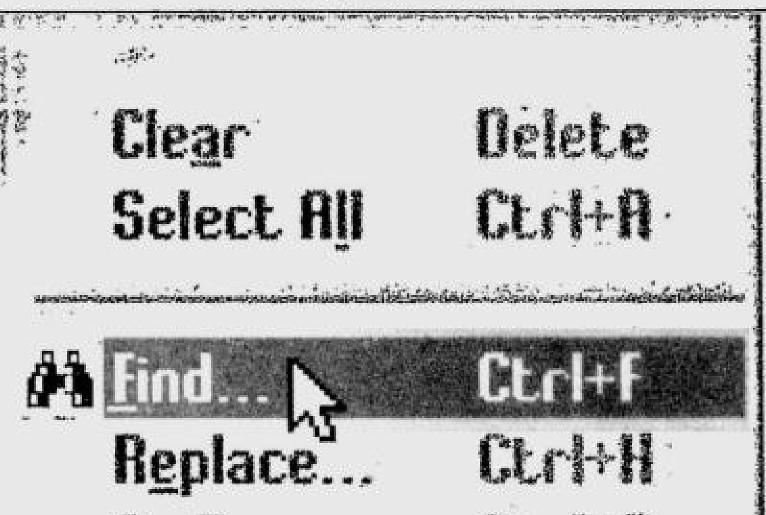
One may argue that the P25 difference between the issue and redemption price is "property appreciation" and is, in fact, a "gain." But this argument is simply too weak to require refutation.

The original issue discount of P25 represents compensation paid by the corporation to the bondholder for use of borrowed funds and simply takes the place of annual interest. However, if one were to apply Section 32(B)(7)(g) of the Tax Code, the P25 should be considered gain from retirement of bonds even if economically it constitutes interest to the holder.

The difference between a coupon bond and a bond issued at a discount is the time of payment of the interest. In the former, the interest is paid periodically, while in the latter, interest is paid at maturity. Why then would interest in one type of long-term bond be subject to tax and in the other exempt? This could not have been the intention of the legislators.

Clearly, therefore, the rulings of the commissioner in BIR Ruling Nos. 166-99 and 016-2000 have a sound basis. If the intention of Section 32(B)(7)(g) is to encourage savings and investment in long-term securities, then "gains from retirement of bonds" should be interpreted to include interest or coupon payments made periodically.

Thus, the latter should likewise be exempt from income tax. Congress should therefore amend the Tax Code to eliminate ambiguity in this provision.



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March 16
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Just imagine, hon, what a 42-inch flat TV can do to our living room. And what about a 10,000-watt PMPO VCD mini compo, huh? Or maybe a 5-speaker DVD home theater system will be perfect. Can our neighbors top THAT? I tell you, these refrigerators I'm looking at right now are even more intelligent than I was before I took my Masters. And, guess what, I just sat in a massage chair. Boy, we can use one of that at home.

Wish you were here, hon. I know you're not much of a techno freak as I am. But you gotta see this. I'll scan some brochures—whatever I can find—and e-mail them over to you. Let's see if you can resist me this time, heh-heh.

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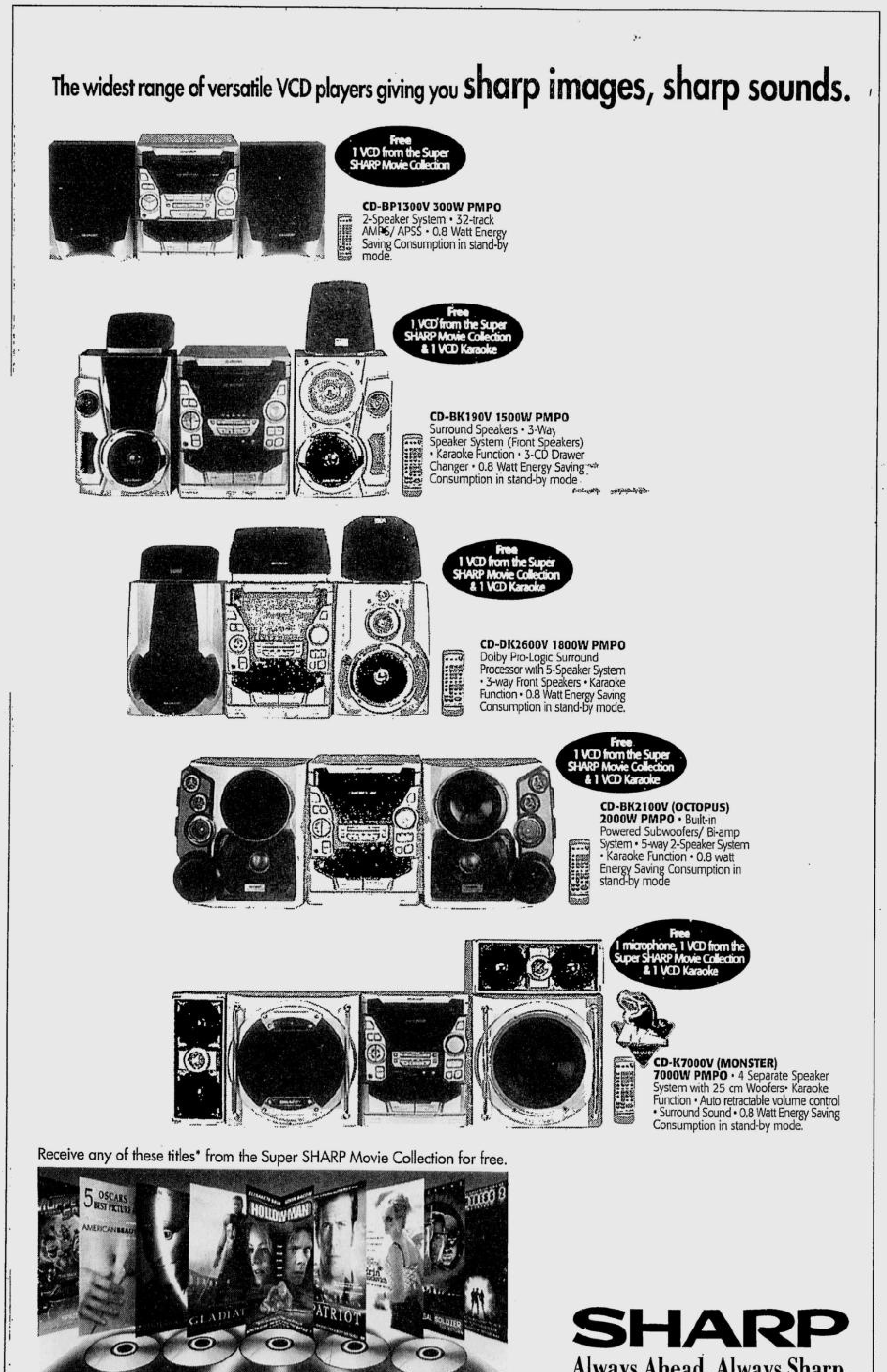
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Whirlpool understands the kind of value you want to place in your home. With the introduction of the pocket-friendly refs from the Eco-Fresh Series, it is now easier to own your very first Whirlpool. Now, you can enjoy world-class quality at a more affordable price.

The Whirlpool Eco-Fresh Refs have the Humidity Control Crisper and a Multi-Air Flow System that regulates temperature and evenly distributes it for freshest food storage. With a Built-In Bio-deodorizer, there is no annoying smell from the stored food. Its Quick Freeze compartment is designed to chill foods quickly so more of the freshness of food is sealed in. It even comes with a reversible door-swing with a special accessory that allows it to open left or right. And because it's tropicalized, the Eco-Fresh Series doesn't "sweat" or rust at the sides.

Visit Automatic Centre today and see how you can bring quality to life in your home the soonest. The Whirlpool showroom at 22 D. Tuazon Street is also open from Mondays to Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Automatic CENTRE
and BPI CREDIT CARDS
APPLIANCE
EXPO 2001
NEW WING ACTIVITY CENTER ALABANG TOWN CENTER
MARCH 16 - 31, 2001
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TOWN
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Aggie Pinili, Account Manager
SPROJECTS@INQUIRER.COM.PH
Aries B. Espinosa, Assistant Editor

AUTOMATIC CENTRE AT 53

Alabang Town Center New Wing

Get Msg New Msg Reply Reply All Forward File Next Print Delete Stop

March 16
Dearest Honey:

I CAN'T even imagine how to start telling you what I've stumbled into here at the new wing of the Alabang Town Center. Suffice it to say that it's happening RIGHT NOW.

I'm surrounded by technology. And I love it!!.

Ahem. But let me begin properly. You know, it happens every year, at summer. Sometimes it happens more than ONCE a year. We used to just look at them and pass on. But now's different. Really different, hon.

I can't believe how behind we are in our appliances at home. I've looked around and—gosh—we need this stuff. We haven't replaced our TV in five years, our ref is rusting over, and I can't sleep with that dang airconditioner whirring like a lawnmower!

Just imagine, hon, what a 42-inch flat TV can do to our living room. And what about a 10,000-watt PMPO VCD mini compo, huh? Or maybe a 5-speaker DVD home theater system will be perfect. Can our neighbors top THAT? I tell you, these refrigerators I'm looking at right now are even more intelligent than I was before I took my Masters. And, guess what, I just sat in a massage chair. Boy, we can use one of that at home.

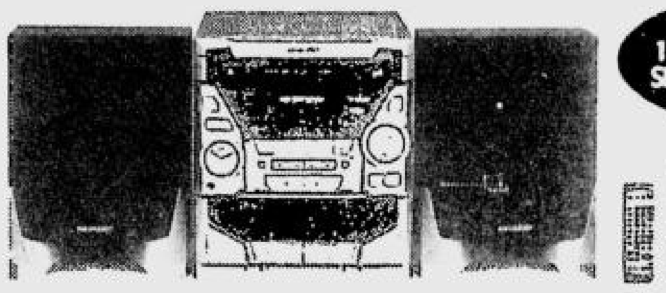
Wish you were here, hon. I know you're not much of a techno freak as I am. But you gotta see this. I'll scan some brochures—whatever I can find—and e-mail them over to you. Let's see if you can resist me this time, heh-heh..

Lots of love,
Dave

AUTOMATIC/ C5

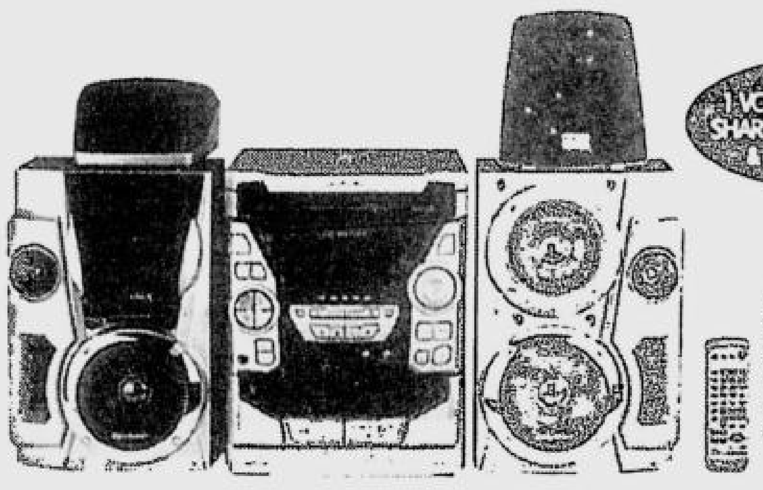
Total messages: 44 Unread messages: 27

The widest range of versatile VCD players giving you **sharp images, sharp sounds.**



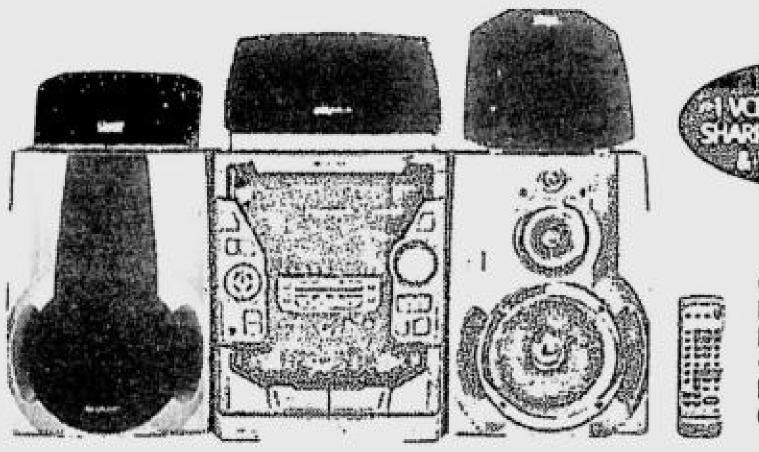
Free
1 VCD from the Super SHARP Movie Collection

CD-BP1300V 300W PMPO
2-Speaker System • 32-track AMPS/ APSS • 0.8 Watt Energy Saving Consumption in stand-by mode.



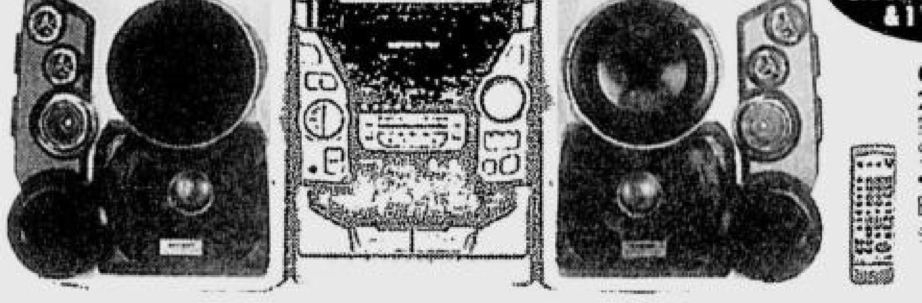
Free
1 VCD from the Super SHARP Movie Collection & 1 VCD Karaoke

CD-BK190V 1500W PMPO
Surround Speakers • 3-Way Speaker System (Front Speakers) • Karaoke Function • 3 CD Drawer Changer • 0.8 Watt Energy Saving Consumption in stand-by mode



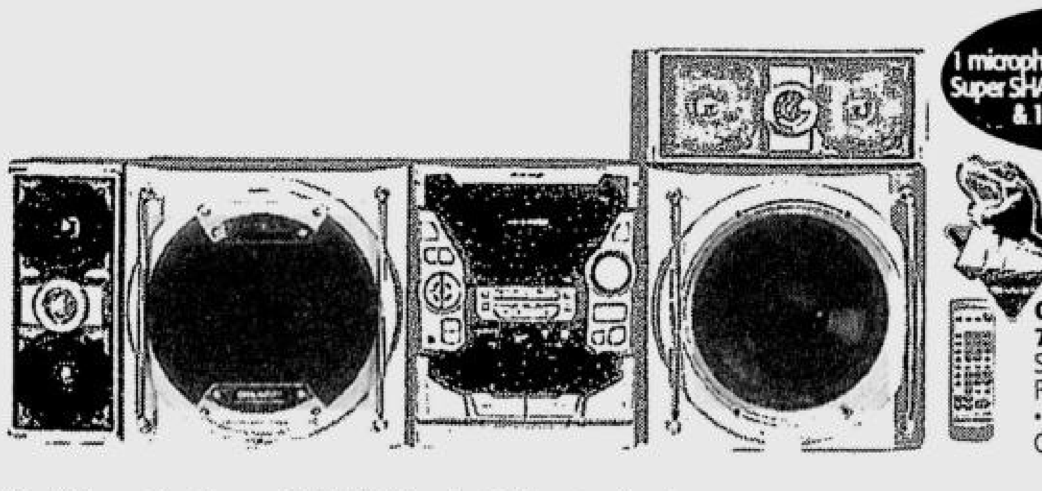
Free
1 VCD from the Super SHARP Movie Collection & 1 VCD Karaoke

CD-DK2600V 1800W PMPO
Dolby Pro Logic Surround Processor with 5-Speaker System • 3-way Front Speakers • Karaoke Function • 0.8 Watt Energy Saving Consumption in stand-by mode



Free
1 VCD from the Super SHARP Movie Collection & 1 VCD Karaoke

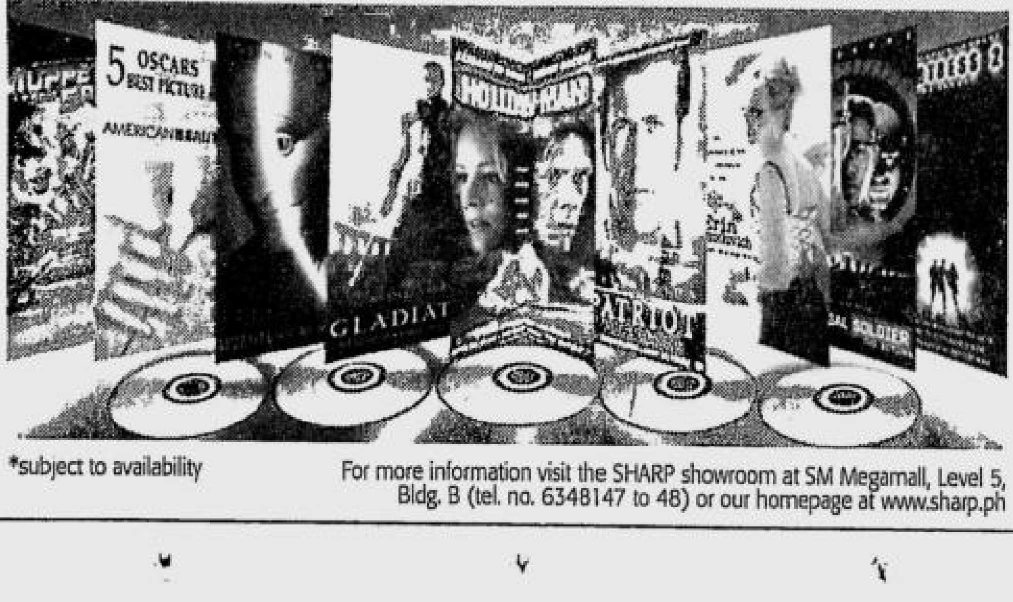
CD-BK2100V (OCTOPUS) 2000W PMPO • Built-in Powered Subwoofers/ Bi-amp System • 5-way 2-Speaker System • Karaoke Function • 0.8 watt Energy Saving Consumption in stand-by mode



Free
1 microphone, 1 VCD from the Super SHARP Movie Collection & 1 VCD Karaoke

CD-K7000V (MONSTER) 7000W PMPO • 4 Separate Speaker System with 25 cm Woofers• Karaoke Function • Auto retractable volume control • Surround Sound • 0.8 Watt Energy Saving Consumption in stand-by mode.

Receive any of these titles* from the Super SHARP Movie Collection for free.



SHARP
Always Ahead. Always Sharp.

*subject to availability

For more information visit the SHARP showroom at SM Megamall, Level 5, Bldg. B (tel. no. 6348147 to 48) or our homepage at www.sharp.ph

Handycam connects to the PC

WITH the advent of the digital age, Sony presents its latest line-up of Handycams. More than its sleek, compact and sophisticated design, it boasts functions that make it an interesting communication tool.

The advances in Handycam technology, especially for the top-of-the-line models, should give potential users reason to expect high-picture quality from all models. With the latest Handycams, video is recorded as digital data so images are clearer with very high resolution. Not to be forgotten, however, are the analog Handycam models. These record in Hi8 format so pictures appear crisper than that of standard 8mm formats.

The new Digital Handycams banner an important feature: PC connectivity. This lets you transfer video data from Handycam to PC into almost any software application. With this capability, you can do a lot with whatever you shoot. Imagine being able to edit images and create your own movie (with appropriate software), put effects and video textures, capture shots and make impressive visual materials, and send everything to anywhere around the world via e-mail. With a little help from your imagination, you can do even more!

Check out the complete line and ask for a demo of the new Sony Digital Handycam, or log on to www.sony.com.ph

Cool summer with Hitachi

EXPERIENCE a cool summer with Hitachi Air Conditioners with its revolutionary multiple balance technology and highly sophisticated designs.

Hitachi, Japan's no. 1 in air conditioning, recently launched their latest units equipped with silent compressors that operate steadily and cause no vibration. Hitachi compressors are also powerful, as rotary pistons make operation smooth and efficient.

Hitachi is also well adapted to the high humidity in the Philippines. Hitachi uses alloy sheets for weather-resistant and rust-proof parts. Visit any Hitachi Air Conditioner dealer and feel quality air conditioning for yourself.

Own your first Whirlpool now

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Automatic Centre at 53

(From page C4)

(Oh, btw, I'm getting my credit card ready. Now, now, no violent reactions this time. The last time I used this was on YOUR birthday)

March 17
Dave,

Now what are you up to this time, little boy? Did you bring Mike and Jeff with you? I hope you remember they still have classes.

Now what are you talking about? What's this technology gibberish? What's happening in Alabang that I should be so concerned about? And why do we need to change our TV set? I've only been gone for two days, and you're starting to get delirious without me. :-)

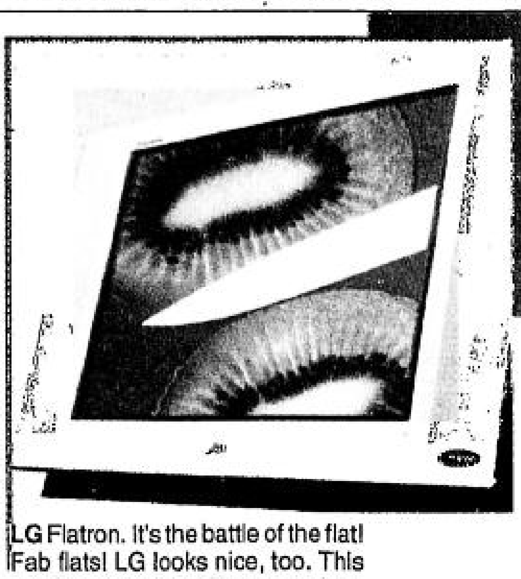
I assume it's Saturday there now. And I assume you're back in Alabang, or, wherever (ATC or Festival?). Don't flood my mail with too many pictures. The laptop's been acting funny lately. Don't know why. Maybe you need to buy me a laptop.

Okay, don't forget to remind Manang Nellie that the laundry should be picked up by Sunday, or you won't be wearing anything to work.

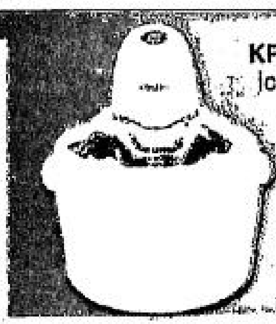
That's all the time I have, hon. I'll send you some of my own pics when a good view presents itself. Oh, I don't mind you using your card, as long as you pay for it, hahaha.

Bye, see you later,
MMMwah,
Beth

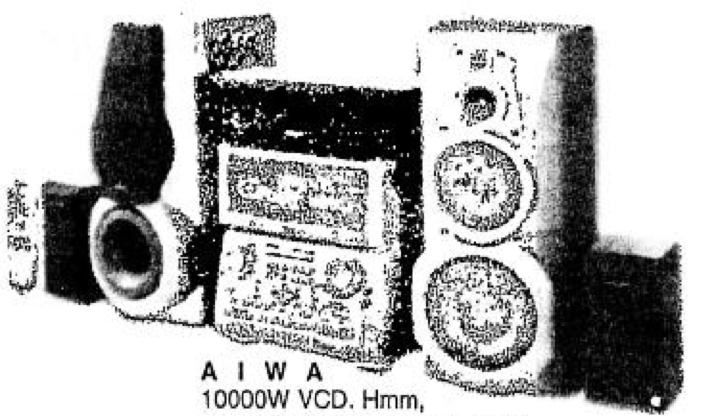
AUTOMATIC/ C6



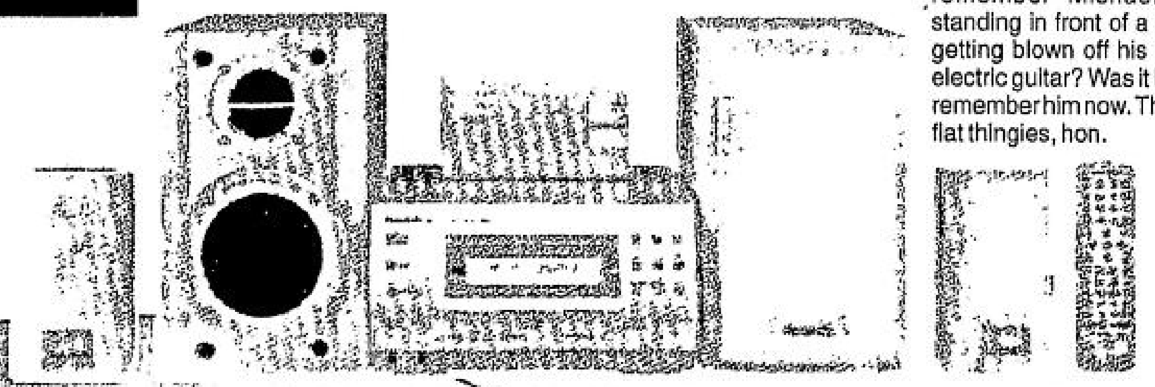
LG Flatron. It's the battle of the flat! Fab flats! LG looks nice, too. This one has the Digital Eye to analyze lighting environment and adjusts the digital signal to produce optimal view of the TV image.



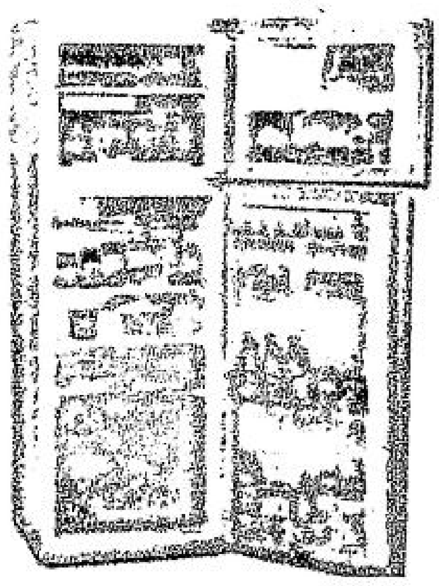
KRUPS coffeemaker and ice cream maker. Remember your frustration in making the "perfect coffee", so to speak? Well, you're gonna need an assistant. Look, it's smarter than I am in making coffee! Auto-rinse, aroma selector, automatic grinder, wow. And you better start learning how to make homemade ice cream, hon. We're going into the dirty ice cream business!



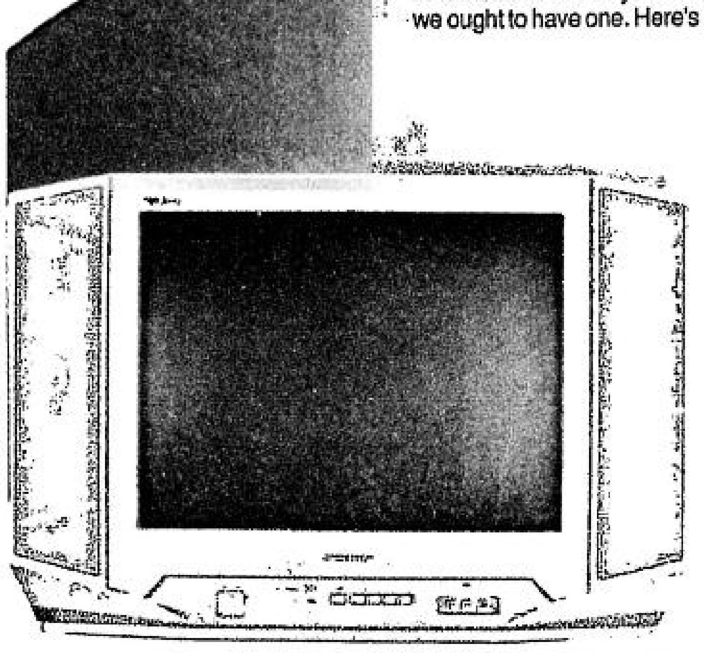
A I W A
10000W VCD. Hmm, remember Michael J. Fox standing in front of a giant speaker and then getting blown off his feet when he plays his electric guitar? Was it Back to the Future? Do I remember him now. This can go well with those flat thingies, hon.



PANASONIC DVD Systems. DVDs are in, babe. And I REALLY, REALLY think we ought to have one. Here's an option from Panasonic. Looks good, huh?



WHIRLPOOL eco-fresh refrigerators. Ever heard of a ref with a Bio-deodorizer? We can use that, especially when Papa attempts his "home-style" cooking and puts the leftovers in our fridge! Haha!



SHARP 29 VJ 200TV. And here's a TV set Darth Vader would love to have.

Total messages: 44 . Unread messages: 27

PARTICIPATING MANUFACTURERS

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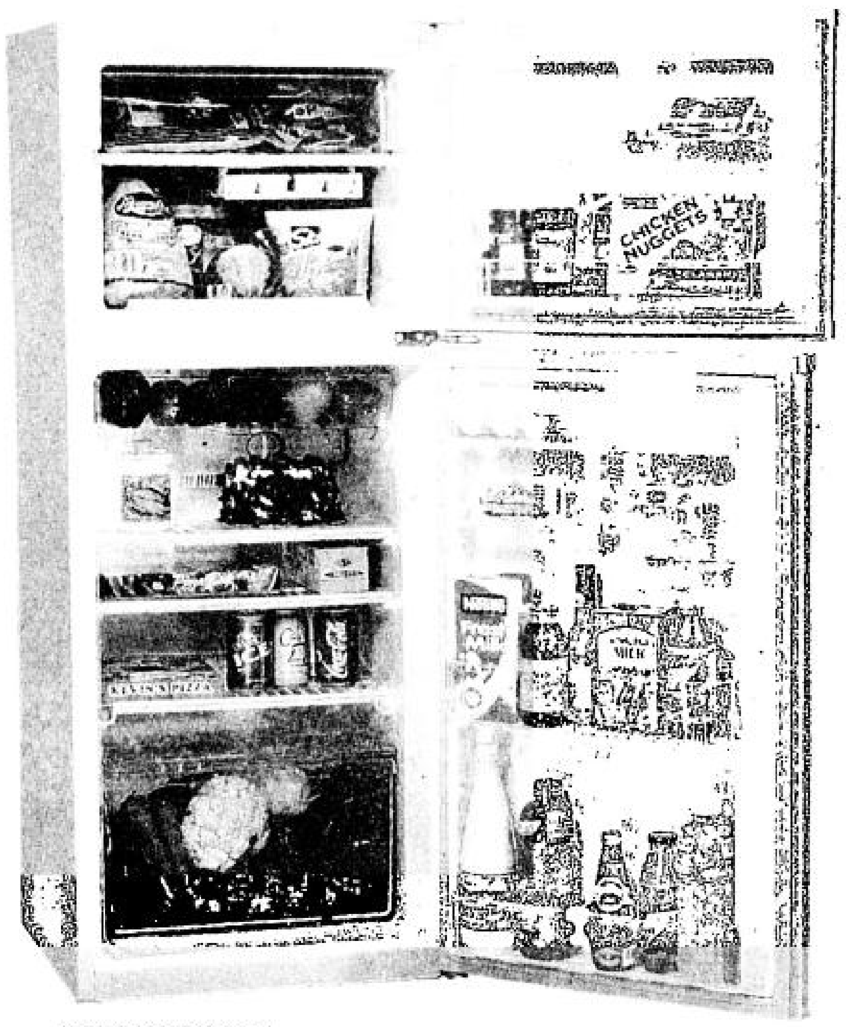
AUDIOVOX
BLIMS fine furniture
Carrier
CONBURA
Dowell
FEDDERS
Frigidaire
Globe
HITACHI
JVC
KOLIN
Konka
KRUPS
laGERMANIA
LG
Moulinex
National
Panasonic
PHILIPS
Pioneer
SHARP
SONY
Whirlpool

Whirlpool
BRINGS QUALITY TO LIFE



WRNP 232 *(240 liters)*

**Also available WRNP 282 (275 liters). Both models are available in Almond and Green*

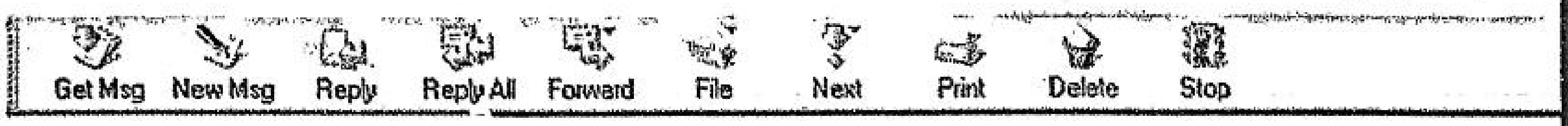
The Whirlpool Eco-Fresh Refrigerator Cool under pressure like a Whirlpool woman.

Inner grace. That's what a Whirlpool woman needs to get by in this world. She's able to juggle her time as a career woman and a responsible homemaker as well. And she shines through with a style all her own, with the help of Whirlpool's world-class home partners, like the latest refs from the ***Eco-Fresh Series***. With dependable features for smart homemaking, such as the ***Humidity Control Crisper*** that regulates temperature and a ***built-in Bio Deodorizer*** that keeps food fresh. Plus ***adjustable shelves*** for ample food storage, with ***clear, see-through bins*** to find food quickly. And because it's ***tropicalized***, a feature that prevents "sweating" and rusting, it stays durably tough for years to come.

The ***Eco-Fresh Series*** and the Whirlpool woman. Cool...even under pressure. Truly, partners in bringing quality to life.

Visit or call us!
MANILA : 22 D.Tuazon St., Quezon City • Tel. No. 732-7370 • Fax. No. 732-7375
MAKATI : 3rd Level, Glorietta 4 (inside Automatic Center), Makati City • Tel. Nos. 729-6450 to 52
CEBU : Lot 3 Block 5 Mandaue North Central, Castilex Compound, Cabancalan, Mandaue City, Cebu • Tel. No. (032) 345-3105
WHIRLPOOL PRODUCTS ARE AVAILABLE AT ALL LEADING STORES NATIONWIDE.

Automatic Centre . . . (From page C5)



March 18
Hon,

Just as I promised, I went through all (I think) the booths and got all the brochures and prices. Oh, didn't I tell you? The whole thing's set up by AUTOMATIC CENTRE. It says on their banner it's their APPLIANCE EXPO 2001, and it's here at the atrium of Alabang Town Center. They did this last year. They're doing it again, it's their 53rd anniversary fair, I guess. Good for us, isn't it?

Okay, here are the pictures of some really cool stuff we can get for our house. Now don't go ballistic over prices. AUTOMATIC CENTRE's got a really smart payment scheme. The whole idea is we go installment on our payments. Guess what. The whole thing's on an exclusive tie-up with BPI Credit Card. And, voila! Ours is a BPI Card! Oh, glory days are here again…

Really, the pictures now. Oh, and I'm throwing in some specs, too.

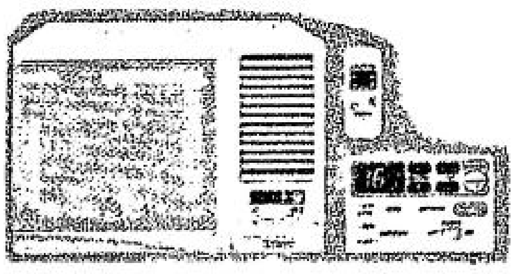
You need a laptop? I'll find out if AUTOMATIC CENTRE has one in their repertoire.

So, Beth, whadya think? Is it a go? C'mon, imagine how even just five new appliances can radically change our house. You know our neighbors will get wind of this event. I just saw Bernie and Jane signing up their BPI cards for a new TV and aircon. There's gonna be some new home theater systems blaring around us in the next few weeks, I'm sure. What're we gonna do? Just sit it out and bear it all? I think not, dear. If we can't beat 'em (and I'm sure we can't with our five-year old TV and stereo), let's JOIN 'EM!

And before I forget, these manufacturers who've joined the fair are really all-out. They're offering great freebies. Not just run-of-the-mill giveaways, I tell you. They've got great-looking free bags, and even free VCD movies when I buy selected products.

Gotta go now. Jeff has a ballgame to catch. Do reply ASAP.

Love you,
Dave

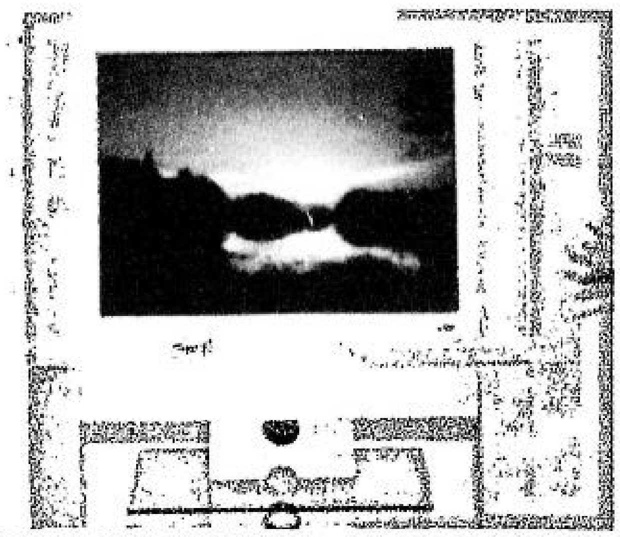


NATIONAL Aircon with remote control. Trash that old aircon, hon. This is what we need in our room; some peace and quiet. Look at all the other added features. It even saves you money.

SHARP calculators. Look at this, even calculators can think! It says here these things let you edit, verify and confirm your calculations. Now why didn't we have these in college?

OMRON chair massager. Ah, here's the massager I told you about earlier. Boy, Manang Nena's gonna run out of business. I can even choose what areas need massaging: the back, the shoulders, lower back, even the legs! It even has a remote. Boy, I'm gonna take a vacation and sit on this for a week!

KOLIN Vibgyor. Aren't the colors cool? You can even see the circuitry inside. Hey, this would look nice in the kitchen, too. You know how you love to watch TV while you cook.



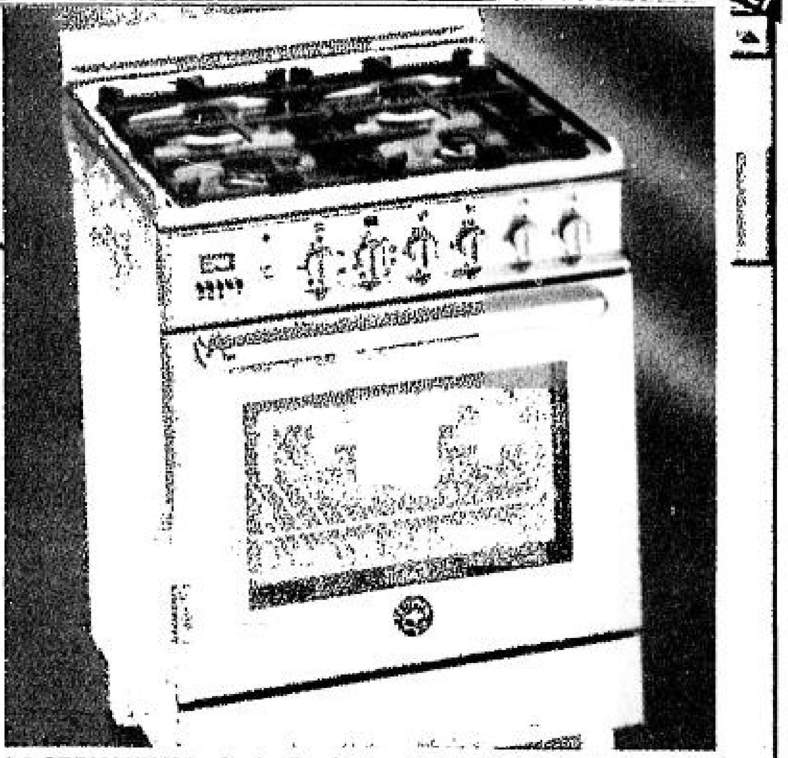
PHILIPS 21-inch Flat TV. What more can I ask for? It's from Philips, it's wide, and it even comes with a free VHS player!

March 18, late night
Dave,

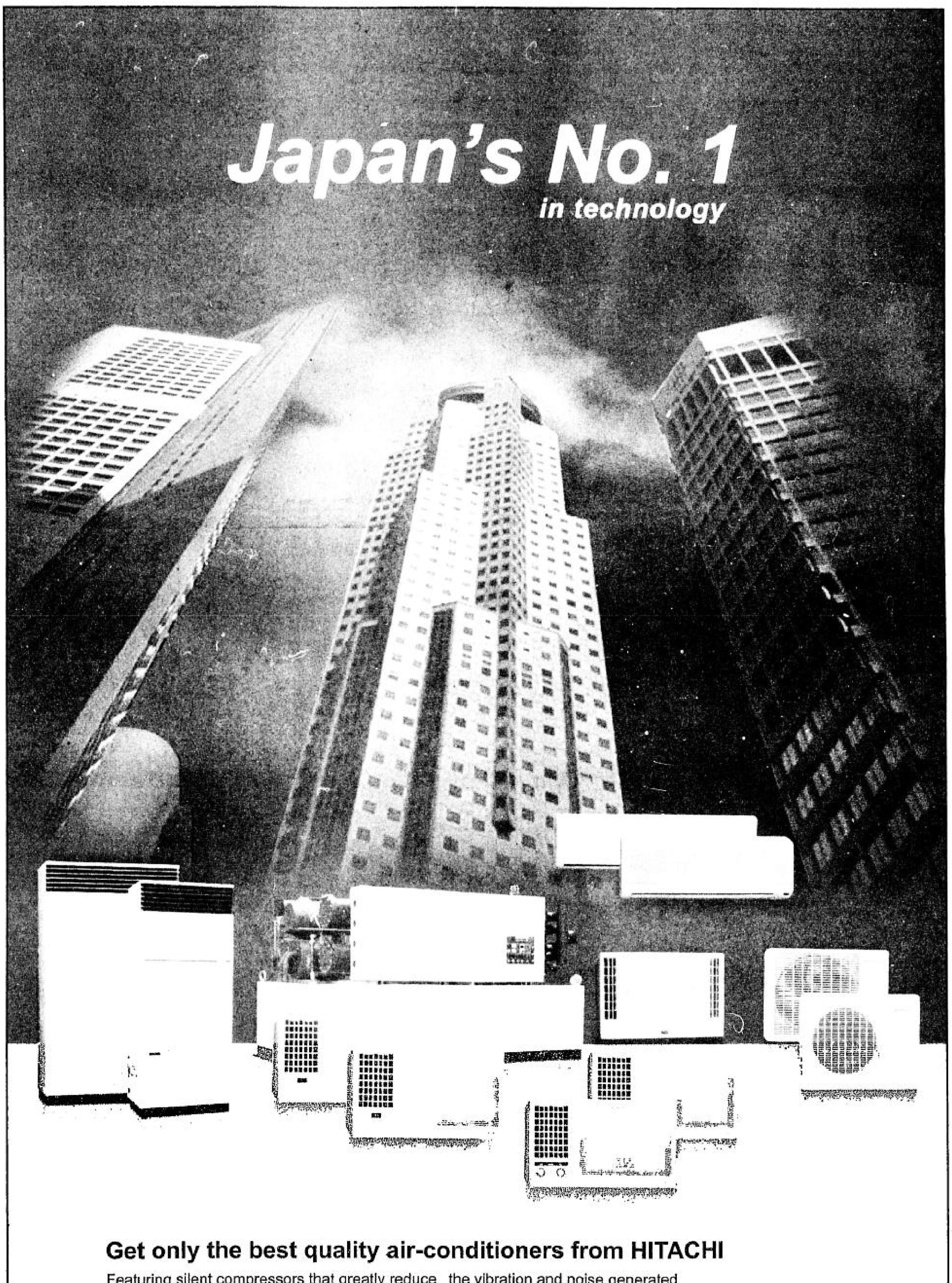
Boy, your graphics really slowed my mail retrieval down. It's Saturday night here, and just got back from the conference. I'm pooped! I'm lonely! Good thing I'm leaving tomorrow, and I'll be back home on Tuesday. Boss said we could leave without him. He's going to Las Vegas tomorrow for some R&R with the regional bosses. Well, I guess he'll have to do the talking for us this time.

I see the pics and specs. Yeah, these are just what I see on Internet

AUTOMATIC/ C7



LA GERMANIA'S Le Cucine line. Hon, note the "Thermobloc" system that cuts off the gas supply automatically when the flame goes out. Neat, huh? The suspended muffle also prevents overheating of the outside surfaces. And look at the designs. It can fit into any corner.



Get only the best quality air-conditioners from HITACHI
Featuring silent compressors that greatly reduce the vibration and noise generated during operation, guaranteed to give the most durable and quiet performance to your home. Truly, Japan's No.1 in air-conditioning technology.

Power and perfomance without the noise.
HITACHI AIR CONDITIONERS

Automatic Centre . . .

(From page C6)

Get Msg
New Msg
Reply
Reply All
Forward
File
Next
Print
Delete
Stop

shopping lists. They are top-of-the-line. But hold it right there. How are you going to pay for this? If you're going to buy them all at once, we might have to wait for a food installment fair for our next meal. We might run out of reserves for real emergencies, hon.

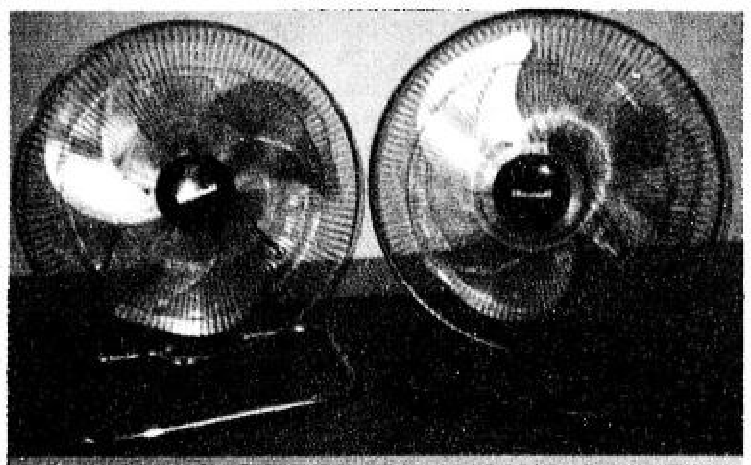
Honestly, though, I think I have some items that I need from that fair. Joey and Elaine are getting married next week, remember? We can get a gas range for them at the fair. What do you think, honey?

I'm soooo tired. I have to sleep first. I'll call you tomorrow at the airport, okay? And don't buy anything without me. We'll have to discuss what to buy first.

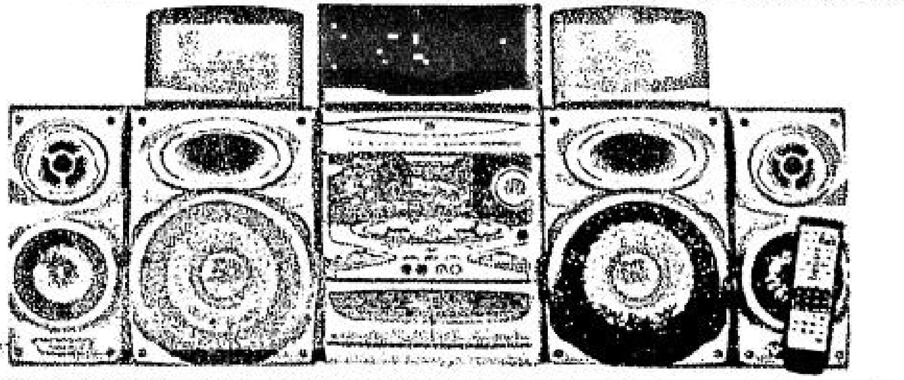
Bye. Goodnight.

Love ya too
Beth

AUTOMATIC/ C8



DOWELL electric fans. Er, do you remember Dino always used to complain that our fans were too weak? Well, we're gonna blow him away this time!

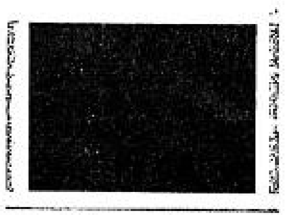


PIONEER DVD VS 500 . Oh, boy, this may be the ultimate in home entertainment, and I can't wait to get my hands, my eyes, and my ears on it. Can you imagine a 7-speaker system with a front 4-speaker system in full throttle at your home? Will we wake up the neighbors? Is the sun a bright star? And if you have your own home theater, then you must have theater control. How smart, I can select Cinema mode, anime, or standard. Now George Lucas never thought of THAT.

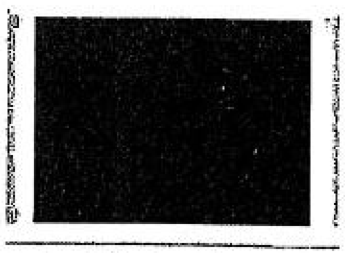
Your fave movie channel is broadcast in stereo.
Are you sure your Flat TV can handle it?

Panasonic
TC-21F3P
T [tau] FLAT DIGITAL

Not all Flat TVs can give you full stereo broadcast.
The Panasonic T (Tau) Flat TV can.



TC-25P22L



TC-29P22L

I like my Panasonic!

Belinda Panelo

Pounding excitement in stereo only from Panasonic T (Tau) Flat TV.
Before grabbing that real cool Flat TV, know that most cannot offer powerful sound in stereo. The Panasonic Tau Flat TV lets you enjoy the coolest Cable and TV programs in stereo. A larger chasis allows for larger speakers so you experience the pure power of sound. So when buying a Flat TV, make sure the sound doesn't leave you feeling flat. Go Panasonic Tau Flat Digital.

What's New by Panasonic

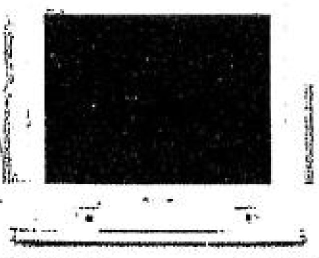
Redemption period: Within 60 days from end of promo period.

I like my Panasonic!

Cool Giveaways!

SEE STANDEES FOR MORE DETAILS.
Promo Period: Jan. 19 to Mar. 31, 2001

FREE His and Hers Sportswatch
with any 315 mm x 410 mm (20") or 315 mm x 420 mm (21") Color TV

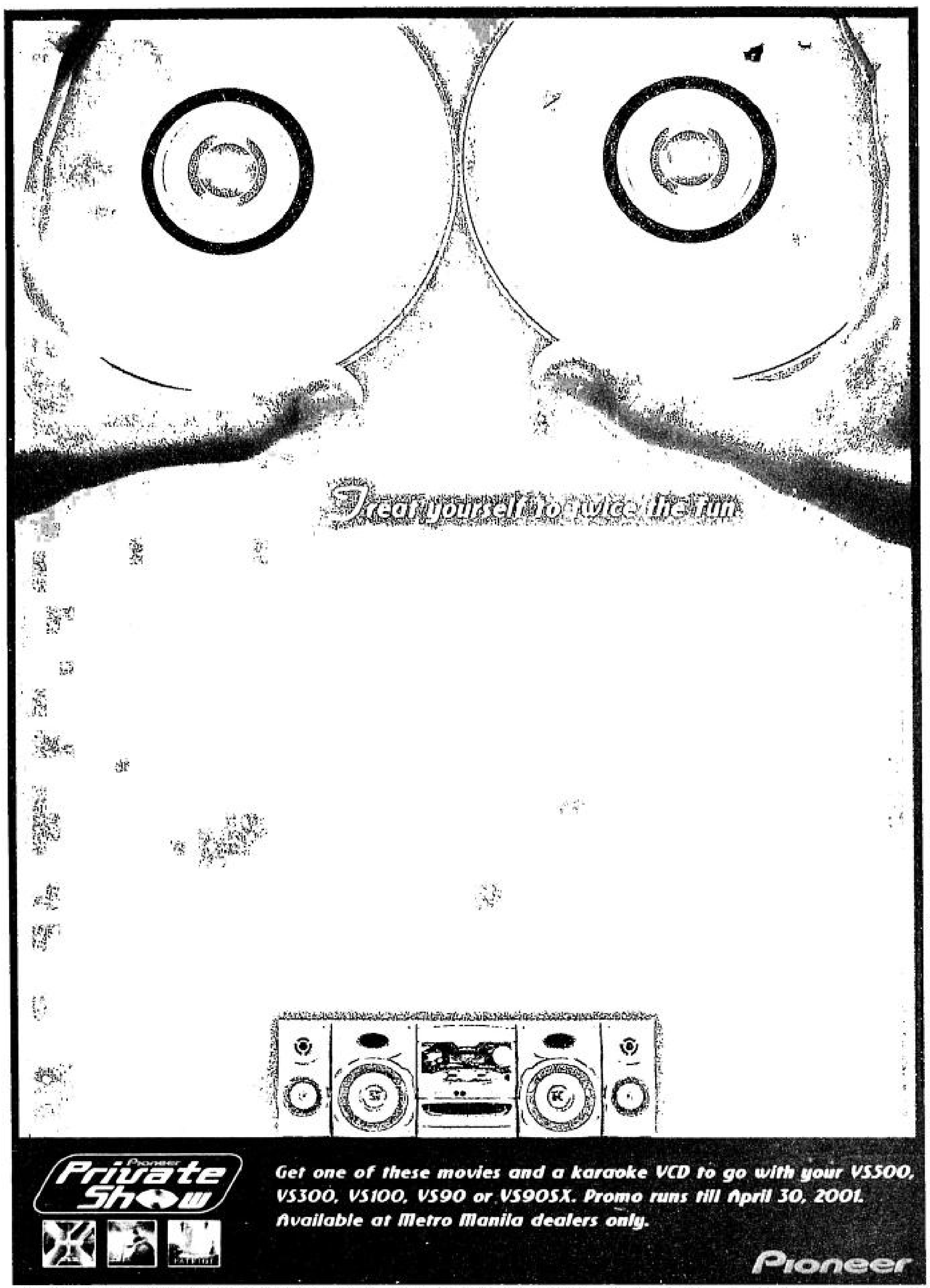


FREE Sportsbag with any VHS model

What's New by Panasonic

Present your proof of purchase to the authorized dealer representative where the Panasonic Color TV or VHS was purchased.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0040, Series of 2001.



Treat yourself to twice the fun
Pioneer Private Show
Pioneer
Get one of these movies and a karaoke VCD to go with your VS500, VS300, VS100, VS90 or VS90SX. Promo runs till April 30, 2001. Available at Metro Manila dealers only.

Automatic Centre . . . (From page C7)

(From page C7)

March 19,
early morning
Beth,

Honey, this is an installment fair, remember? We both have our BPI Credit Cards. We both have two separate credit lines. You have your regular credit limit, AND your SIP credit limit. I have both, too. That means, we actually have FOUR credit lines to finance our needed upgrading. We can buy any five appliances, and still have room for that gas range for Joey-boy.

And if we choose our items right, we can even buy our appliances on installment at zero interest. Everything's going our way. Alabang Town Center's not even 10 minutes away. Delivery won't be a problem.

We can put Joey's gas range on AUTOMATIC CENTRE's Bridal Registry. You know, items bought for the BRIDAL REGISTRY are available on installment as well. Remember December two years ago when we were in Glorietta 4? AUTOMATIC CENTRE started it.

You know how we can add value for our installment purchases? All I have to do is enter my purchases into the WARRANTY PLUS scheme. You know, just to make sure that if we have future problems with our appliances, we won't have to worry about it. Every item we buy gives us the option to add years to the item's factory warranty coverage. Gosh, we can add up to four years additional warranty coverage, making items covered by the manufacturers' warranty effective up to five years!

Hope you read this before you leave. I wouldn't want you on that plane with an overload of worries. Don't we always travel light, in body and mind, dear? :-)

I'll see you later at the airport. Buy me lots of chocolates.

Take a lot of ingats, huh?

E-mails created by Aries B. Espinosa

Is your Warranty good for only 1 year?

Get the WARRANTY Plus

EXTENDED Care for your appliances for up to 5 years!

From Automatic Centre

Call our HOTLINE
754-3515
for more information

GET WARRANTY Plus NOW!

SONY
See How The New Sony Handycam Puts You In Control
Shoot
Take images of yourself even by yourself anywhere
Stick
Store your images, even moving ones, in its built-in Memory Stick slot
Edit
Create flawless flow of images with its easy editing capability!
Share
Send your edited clips to your family anywhere they are. Talk about digital connectivity!
Digital 8
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
D1
LIFESTYLE
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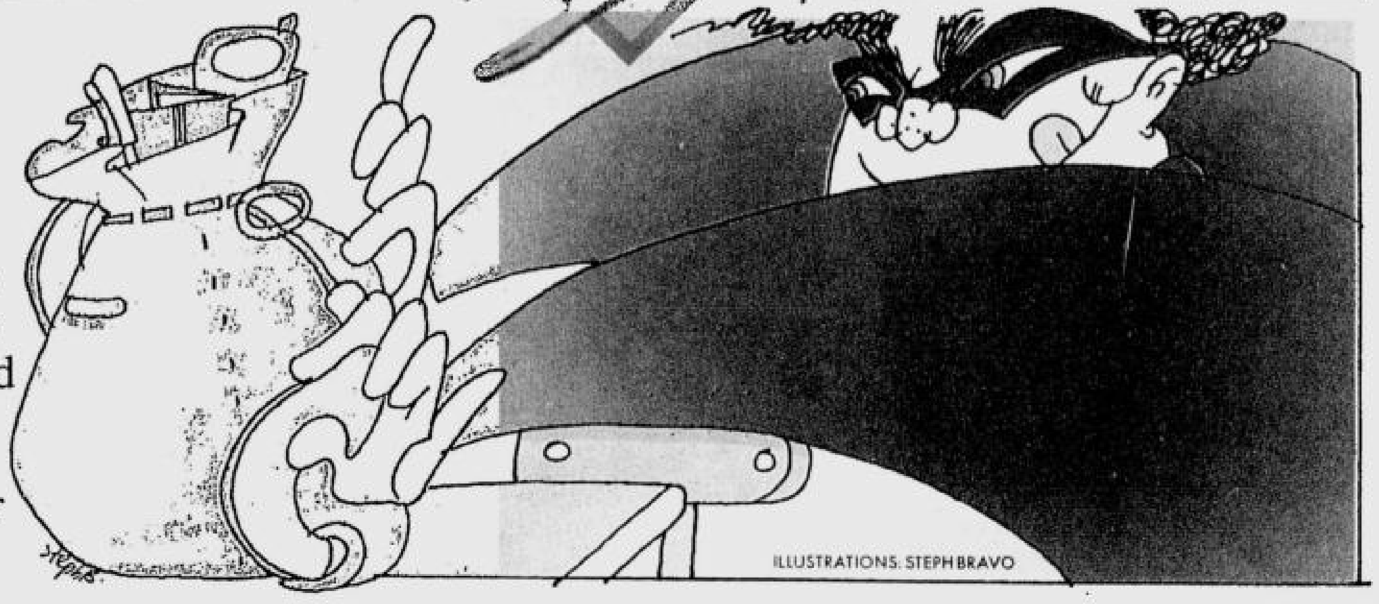
How we lost money to non-politicians



ILLUSTRATIONS: STEPH BRAVO

I KNOW that recounting this incident is like declaring my stupidity, but since many women have had their bags snatched at least once in their lives, then perhaps my stupidity is not unique.

As my friend **Auggie** told me last week, "You think that's so stupid—until it happens to you." In his rare moment of sympathy I learned that he, too, lost his wallet once in Divisoria.

Like Philippine elections, bag-snatching has reached the art of sophisticated conspiracy in the summer of 2001

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

I believe now that you deserve, or you're asking for, such an experience at least once in your life, and since summer is here when we'll all be making a pit stop to some out-of-town destination, this could happen to you, too. Like Philippine elections, bag-snatching has reached the art of sophisticated conspiracy in the summer lifestyle of 2001.

Mine happened two weeks ago at a pit stop in North Expressway. We were on our way back to Manila from Clark when we decided to stop at Petron, that Californiaesque sprawl of fast-food chains before the Toll. I wasn't really famished; I just wanted to inspect the magazine stands. Mistake. We decided to have coffee and fries at McDonald's. Bigger mistake.

McDonald's that 5 p.m. on a Sunday wasn't even half-packed. We sat in the unoccupied section, about 4 ft away from the guard. I placed my bag right beside me, and get this clear, all the other tables around us were empty. Then a man standing outside McDo tapped on the glass wall overlooking the parking lot.

We didn't look, he tapped again gesturing at us. We looked, then seeing there was nothing to that commotion, we resumed our chat. A few minutes later I looked at my side—my bag was gone. And to think we saw no one approach our table.

It happened in a blink

Fact was, we were distracted to that man's direction that we didn't notice anyone slip past our table.

The guard claimed he saw no one either. All this happened in a blink—like all pick-pocketing and bag-snatching do.

My friend's instinct was to run to my car, for my car keys were in my bag. The car was safe. My instinct was to call to have my credit cards cancelled. The Petron guards, of course, launched a search but I knew it was too late. Those operators must have already gotten away in a vehicle presuming their loot for the day was enough.

Fortunately, they were wrong—I had less than a thousand bucks in my wallet, thank God for a shopaholic like me who couldn't resist the call of Royal Clark and Puregold (where, by the way, the toilet paper was no longer a cheap buy, unlike in the pre-Edsa II days, when Puregold was the place to go for very cheap imported stuff. I'll give you one guess why). That was one day when I was glad about my chronic shopping urge—at least you beat the thieves to your cash and convert this into goods.

I must say the Petron and McDonald's managers were so solicitous to us, giving us free use of their office so we could make all the calls and guarding our car as we sent for duplicate keys. And the guards also searched all the trash bins. They claimed mine was only the second reported case of bag-snatching in the area.

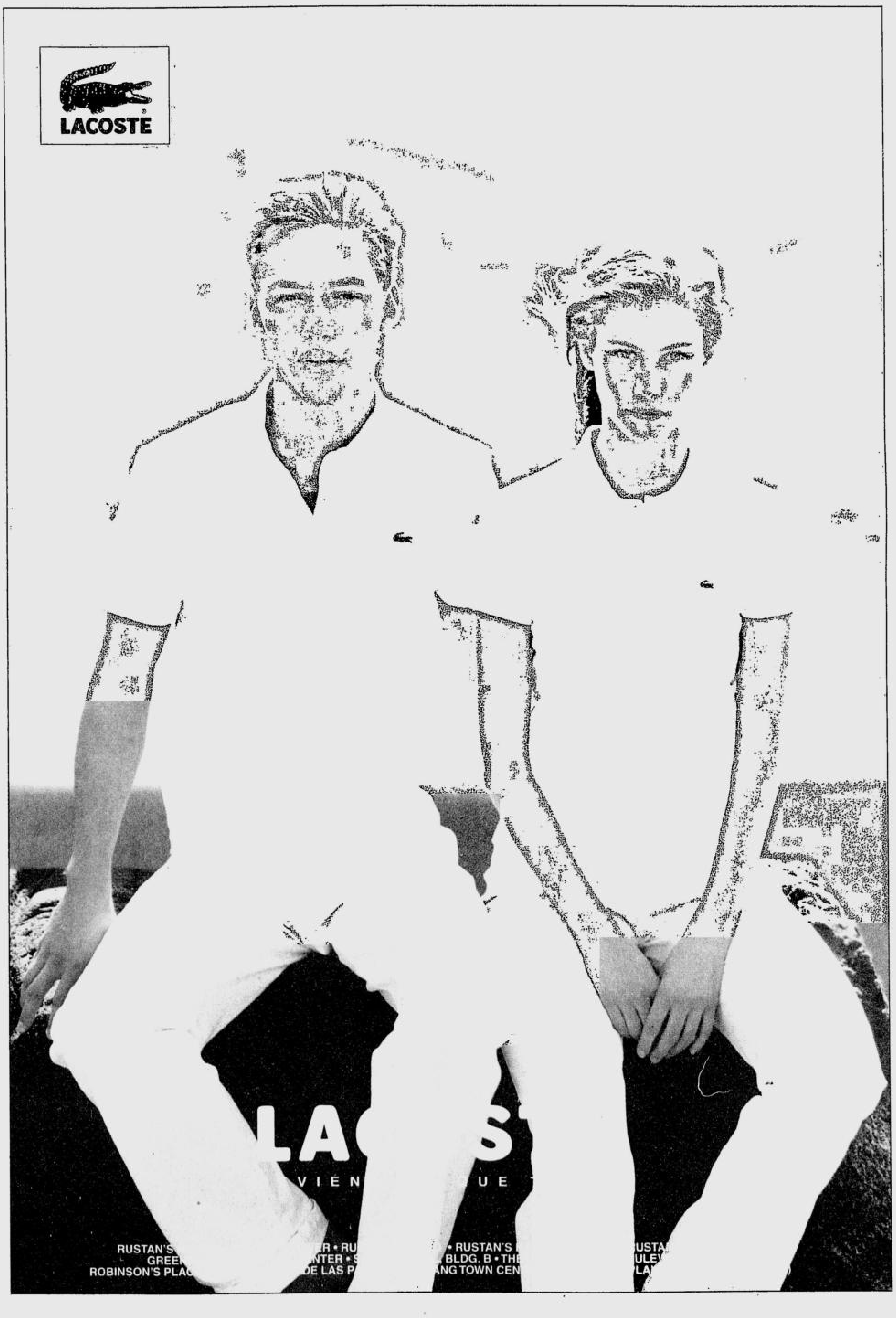
Losing my bag is the closest feeling I can get to a near-death experience, for now I hope—you see all your stuff flashing before you: your Prada bag (old birthday gift, okay; I can't afford one, not even now that I have crossed the great divide from newspapering to the corporate), your Palm V (an office provision), your cell (a non-Nokia, so left uncoveted by my kids), your silver Montblanc (this one hurts; sorry, **Tita Virgie**), your LV credit card holder (a giveaway at Louis Vuitton launch), your credit cards and your driver's license (this one really hurts; this one where my picture didn't look like an ex-convict's; you realize that's a feat for a driver's license). You'll be amazed how you can live without these things, even if only temporarily. Back to the real basics (uh, like driving without texting).

Horror experiences

Now the immediate move was to cancel the credit cards.

Before the Petron office could offer me their phone, I had to use my friend's cell phone,

HOW / p.D7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AT THE RESIDENCE of her parents, former President and Ms Diosdado Macapagal in Forbes Park, Rupert Jacinto photographed Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo with her mother, former first Lady Eva Macapagal, and her daughter, Luli.

Book chronicles RP's Who's Who

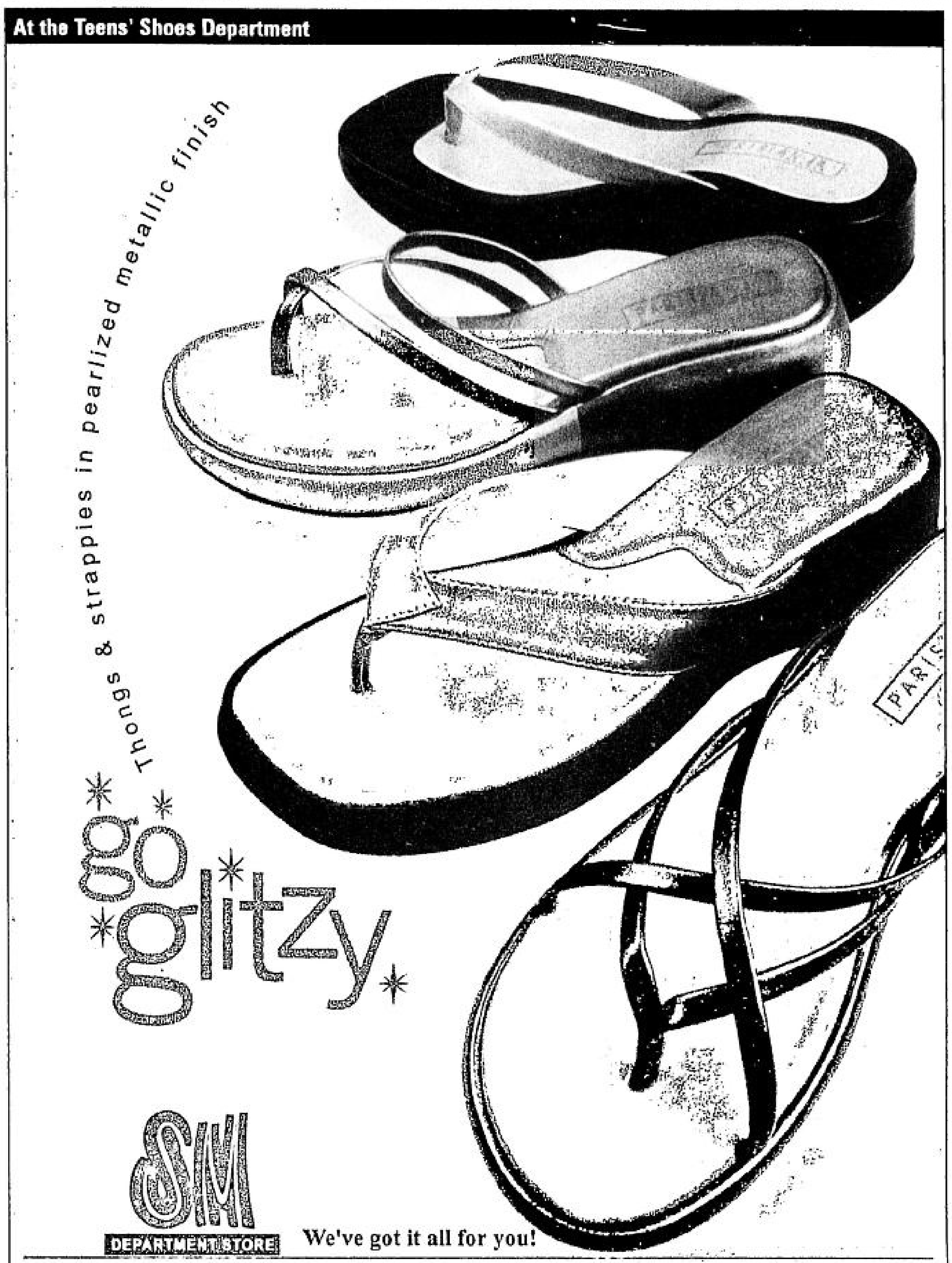
GLORIA on the fringe of political stardom

PHOTOGRAPHER Rupert Jacinto is finishing his coffee-table book, "Celebrating the Filipino: Portraits of an Era." With hundreds of portraits, the book will feature the four presidents from Corazon Aquino to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

In 1993, Jacinto photographed Macapagal-Arroyo when she was still a senator, for his exhibit at the Peninsula Manila. The portrait is displayed at Malacañang's Reception Hall. Jacinto is working on the new portraits of the President and Vice President Teofisto Guingona.

The project's team includes Jacinto's assistant Jonathan Cornejo, coordinator Tina Jacinto, Linda Gamboa of the Advertising Foundation of the Philippines, with its chair Pedro Dy-Liaco of Nestle Philippines, editor Mimi Katigbak de Jesus, writer Lisa Mapua, guest writer Felice Sta. Maria, Angel Bunag of Design Systemat, Rene Cribe of Visual Color Inc. and Cedric Rivera of Jacinto Studio. The other sponsors are The Peninsula Manila, Northwest Airlines, Anthony's Wines and Spirits.

At the Teens' Shoes Department



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From varnishing to Awakening

PHOTOS BY WAHOO GUERRERO

Body Shop departs from the usual gloss and artifice to come up with a new cosmetic line that is more subtle and natural

AFTER SEASONS of high gloss and glitter, makeup this summer goes subtle in terms of shine. Body Shop's Awakening look is not so much a color story, rather, it's a translucency, says Merry Carlos.

The makeup expert and consultant for Colourings, Body Shop's cosmetics line, says the products enhance your natural beauty. "Because you feel good inside and out, there's nothing to mask your features."

Pink, lavender and peach are the basic colors, combined with platinum, fawn and gold highlights and earth tones for the eyes. Since everything is in cream, gel or tints, the makeup is subtle and unpretentious.

To get the clean look, the Glow Enhancer is a sheer moisturizer that also treats the skin with rosehip, jojoba oil and algae extract. It also minimizes fine lines. To bounce off the light, the Natural Highligther is a pink emulsion with pearl particles for that summer glow.

The new products come in limited edition such as the Shimmer Dust, a loose powder that lends a shimmery effect. The pink shade is recommended for pale faces. The gray shimmer dust neutralizes redness while calico adds a glow to yellowish complexion.

For those who have dry lips from wearing too much matte lipstick, the Lip Mist glosses and Lip Treat Lipstick moisturizes and protects the lips, while giving them color. Another collector's item is the Lip Quench which is packaged in a pen with a built-in brush. You just twist the pen and apply directly. The lip colors contain sunscreens and light-diffusing pigments that disguise the fine lines.

Since Awakening pays tribute to nature, the packaging is shaped like white pebbles to appeal to the young market.

Organic olive oil is the key ingredient in the makeup. It serves as an emollient and has been culled from the Italian Nuoveo Cilento Co-operative. The co-operative was established in 1976 when farmers abandoned the land. With Body Shop's trade links, the co-operative has been able to revive the olive oil industry.

Carlos says the makeup contains antipollution ingredients. This is another trend in skin care and makeup.

The Duo Particles is known as a fun makeup. Two shades of metallic shades in one pot. It really consists of tiny powder beads that give a striking pearlized effect on the eyes and face. For an even color, press and rub the powder balls with your fingers, then apply. You can use blue across the eyelids and silver under the browbone.

Awakening colors flatter the *morena* complexion. For fairer skins, women must apply more color to get the effect they want.

Marge C. Enriquez

SARAH MEIER wears a Prebase with Glow Enhancer, calico and pink Shimmer Dust on the face and eyelids.

HAIR AND MAKEUP
BY PETER URBI
AND MERRY CARLOS

SARAH'S pinkish glow

FORMER model Elektrika wears a liquid concealer, Duo Particles in gold and bronze, lavender Lip Quencher and Lip and Cheek Gel in red rush.

THE BODY Shop Colour launches Awakening, this season's newest line, via a mall tour ongoing until March 17 at the activity area of the Power Plant, Rockwell Center, Makati, and on March 30-31 at the 5/L Atrium, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong.

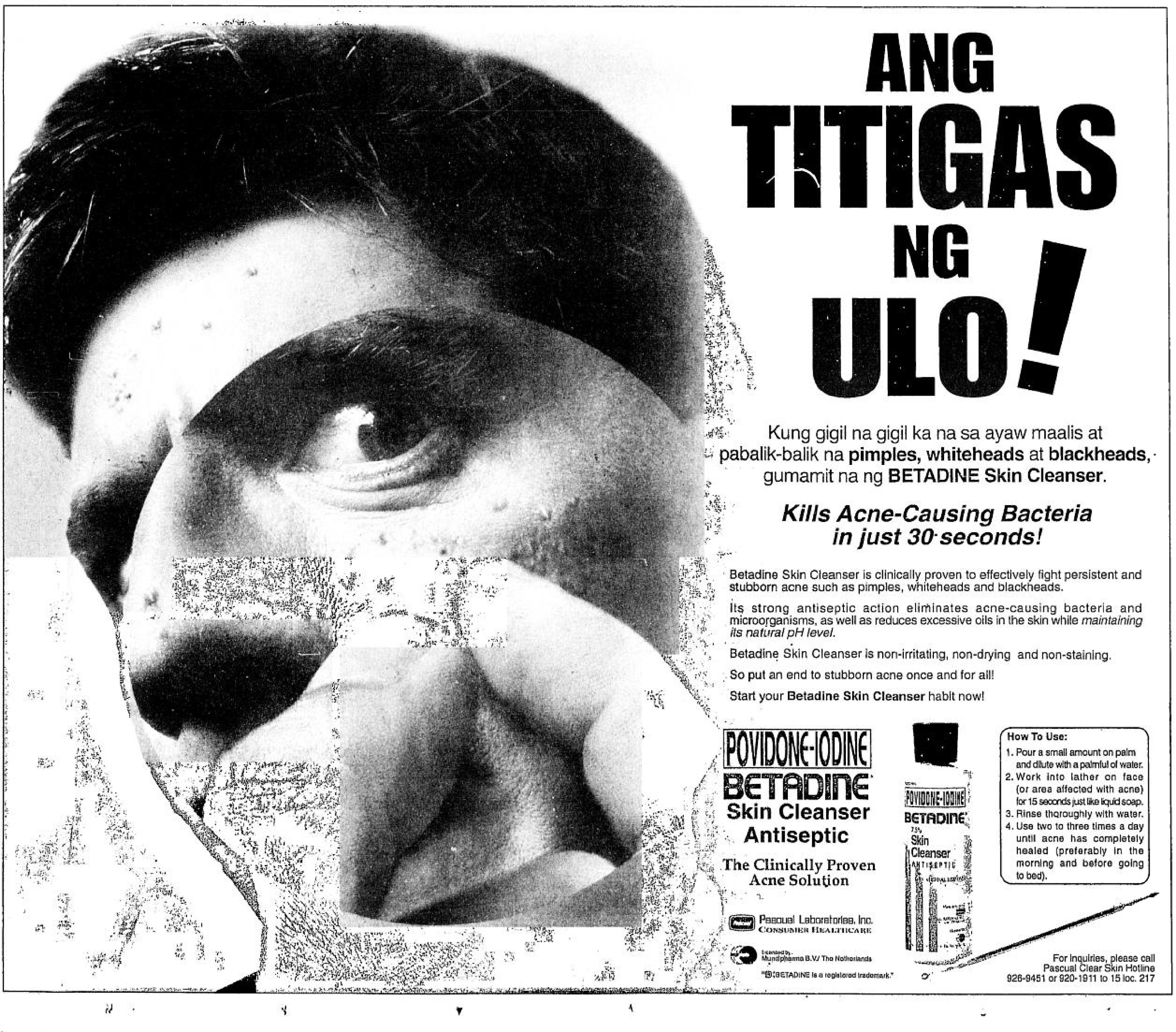
The Body Shop will offer free makeovers to shoppers who want to try the look of the season..

On March 31 at Shangri-La Mall, Mega Magazine and Meg Magazine will be on hand to provide free fashion advice. Ever wondered how you would look as a cover girl of these famous mags? Meg and Mega will provide customers availing of a makeover of a digital image of this fantasy.

Today, March 16, be discovered as the Seventeen Magazine Girl of the Day and get featured in the magazine.

On March 17 (Rockwell) and March 30 (Shangri-La) round up your buddies for a professional photo shoot by Teen Philippines Magazine and get a chance to see your pictures in the magazine.

Free coffee coupons will be given out to the first 30 makeovers every day.



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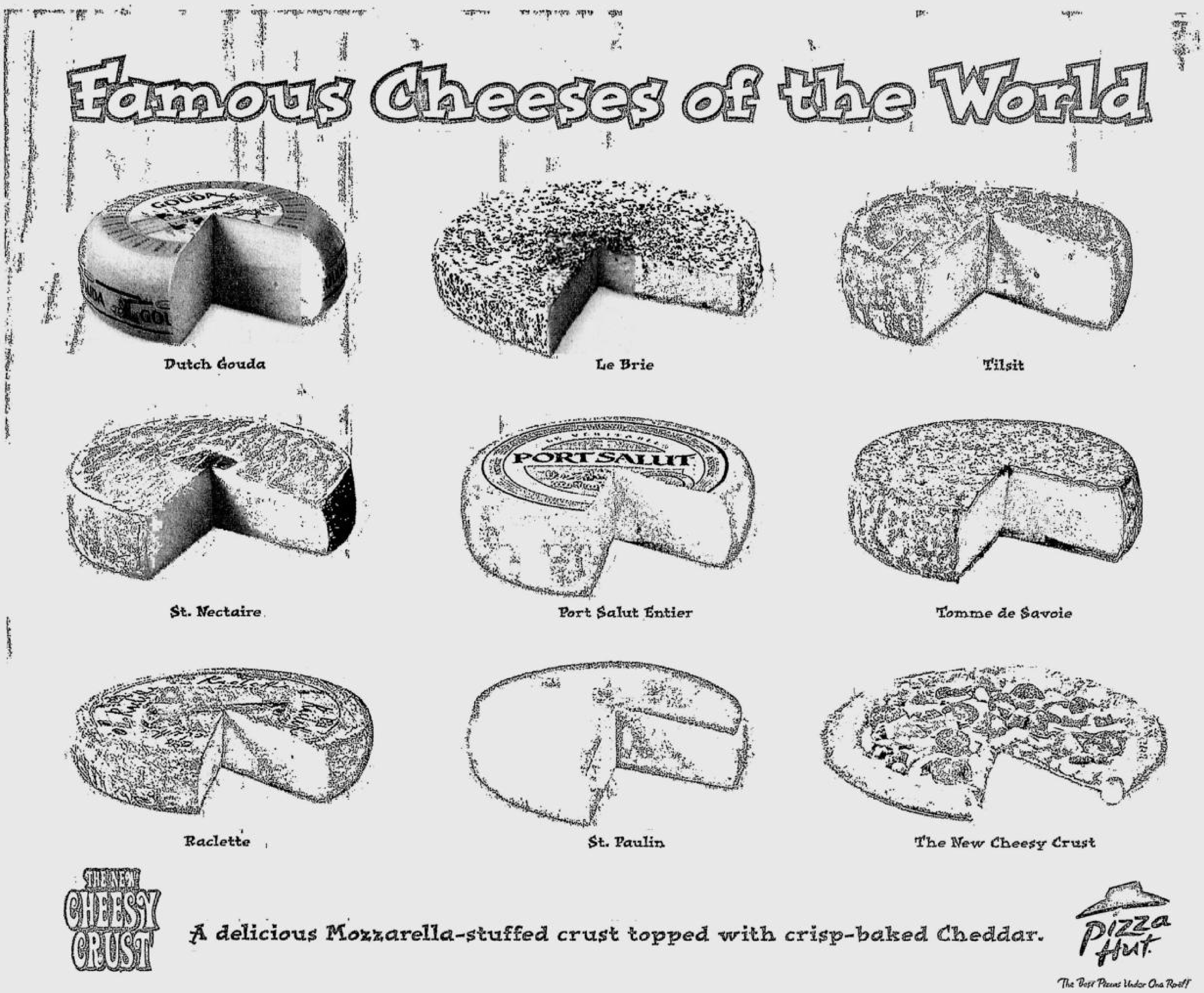

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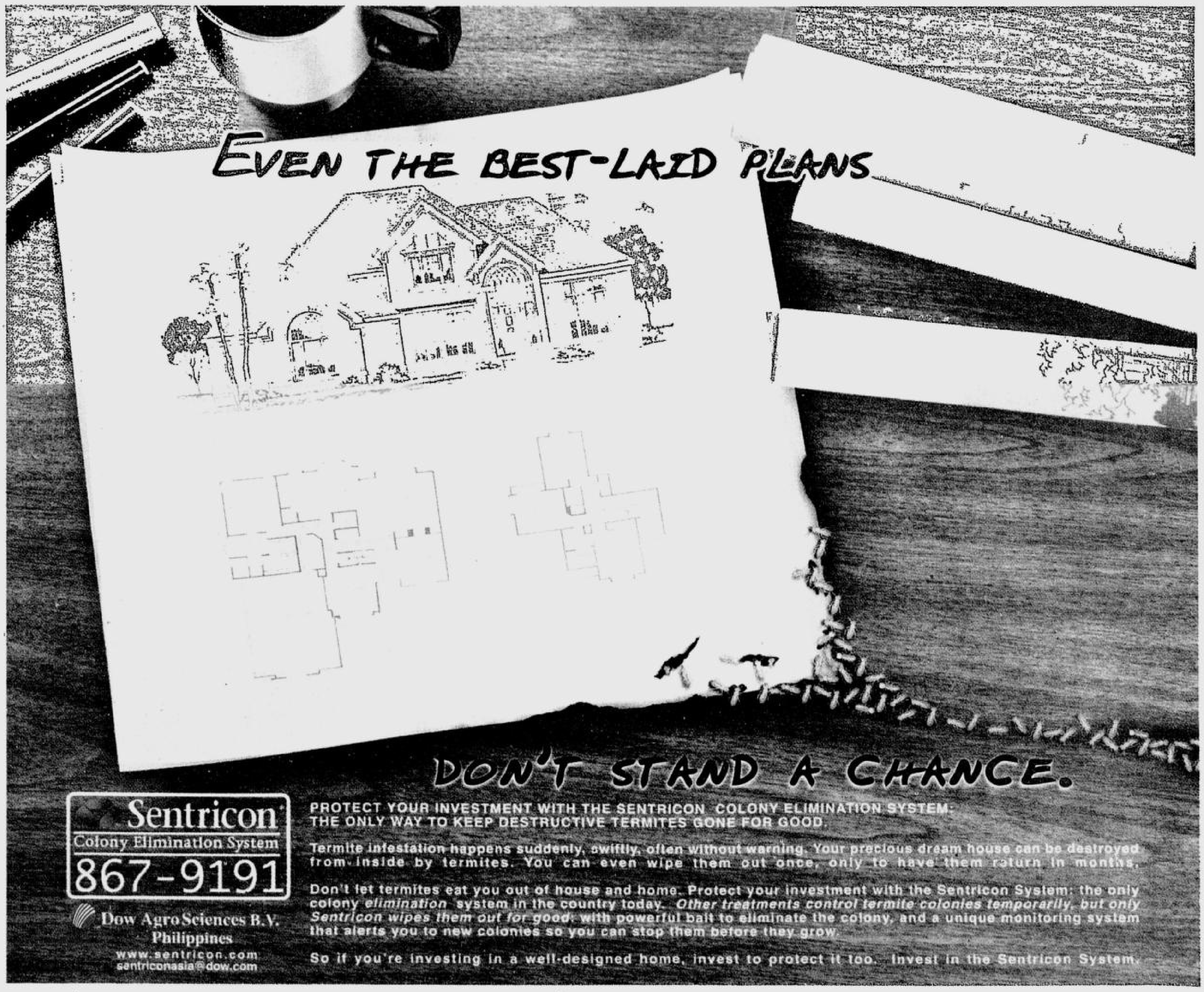

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REPTILE skin with a new pizzazz. A throwback to the '80s, the reptile skins are dyed in bright colors. The Anapatto alligator style shows a special treatment in order to furnish it with sensual style. An important innovation is the special canvas braided with leather and rayon from the Philippines which confers a slightly ethnic but modern look.

THE ANTE Oro suede collection, which is the most salable, exudes the sporty chic spirit. The combination of lambskin suede, silky kidskin and flexible cowhide makes it a Loewe classic.

The lowdown on Loewe

By Marge C. Enriquez

TO FILIPINOS whose bible is American Vogue, Loewe is arcane. A label isn't desirable to them unless it is validated in the editorial pages of US fashion magazines.

But to fashionistas who frequent Europe, Loewe is as attractive as Louis Vuitton. Connoisseurs of leather commend the soft, supple leather and the manual labor that went into the bag that's just as pricey as LV.

Loewe is positioning as a 21st-century brand with a particular style. From a conservative classic, it has acquired the confident colors and equally bold shapes of the new millennium.

Spanish icons

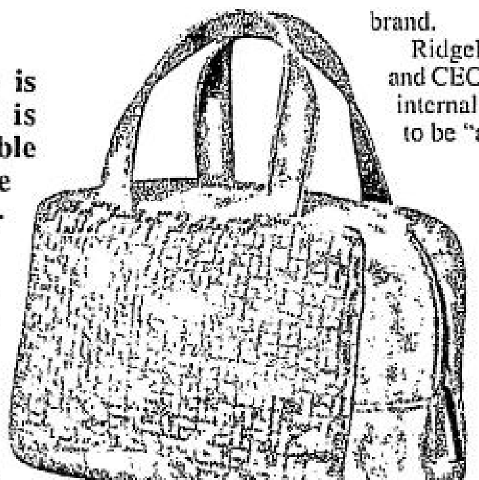
This writer visited the Loewe boutiques and factories in Barcelona and Madrid in 1995. Journalists worldwide were flown in to celebrate the 150th anniversary of this brand that was founded by a German émigré, Loewe, thus the name.

Although the colors and styles were safe then, the quality of the leather was superior, soft as butter but tough as hide. Loewe also sold ties and scarves with icons that stereotyped Spanish culture—flamenco skirts, mosaic tiles, bullfighters. Even the video featured *palmas* and *zapateados* of the flamenco. Although the cultural references made the label distinctive, they also limited its appeal to a wider market.

Loewe was a family business then, therefore the ambition was different. It was the top luxury brand in Spain, but what worked for the Iberian peninsula didn't always work for the world.

Enter Louis Vuitton Möet Hennessy. This most powerful luxury group in the world is out to transform a Spanish luxury label into a global brand.

Ridgely Cinquegrana, Loewe's president and CEO, made the brand younger and more internally appealing. Loewe was not going to be "a travel agency" for Spain.



TRENDY. Lambskin suede bag with transparent plastic laminates that form geometric "L's."

Under Louis Vuitton Möet Hennessy, the Spanish leather house has made the global fashion market its flamenco stage. ¡Ole! or is it Voila!

Bigger and better

There was a lot of change from the management process down to the stationery. "We tried to keep the quality, tradition and the artistic process combined with modern technology," Cinquegrana said.

"The first thing we did was come to Asia in the middle of the crisis. Get a better distribution, bigger stores, better places, redo the merchandising concept of stores, build the logistic center. We invested heavily in information technology so we know where our products are, so we can deliver the products earlier to the market. We've been trying to find out what the consumer is looking for in the types of products. We listen to our subsidiaries and restructure a lot of them. The beginning was tough. Maybe you lose the older customers, maybe you don't gain the new ones right away.

"My job is, to be in the future, what we are now or even better, strive for perfection, getting better all the time," Loewe's CEO said.

THE BACKPACK is practical, sporty, youthful and capacious for today's woman who puts her entire life into her bag.

New look

In the past Loewe was differentiated by a taste for sober, quiet bags made of silky leather. It still retains its distinctive characteristics such as the handmade construction of the shoulder straps, the slightly asymmetric securing of the body, the clean arrangement of seams and the wooden bases in the boxcalf collection.

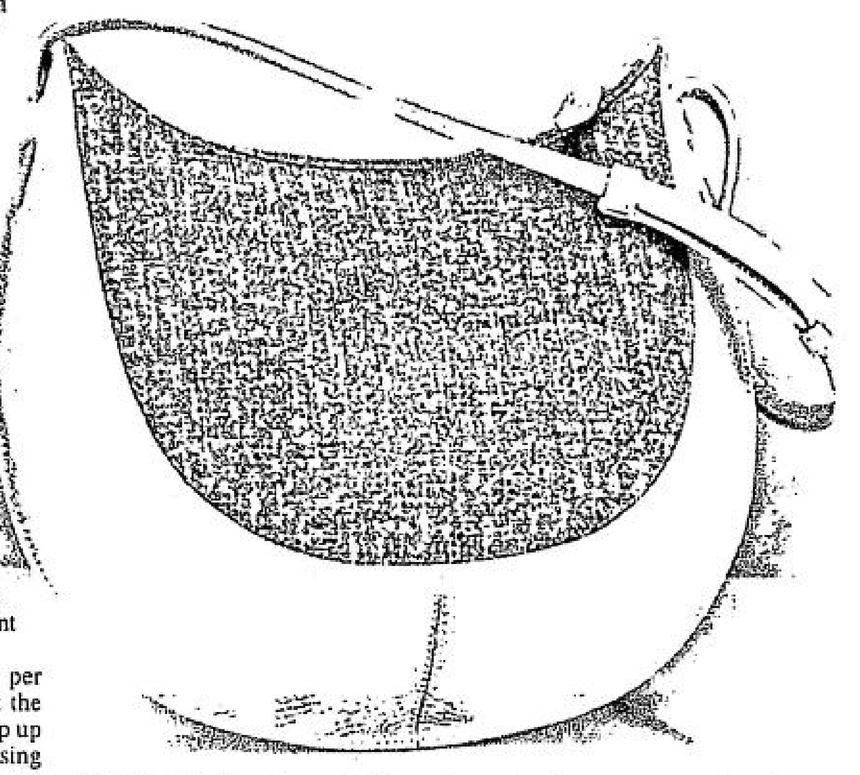
Today the scale and color of the handbag mirror the ideals of a new management and the lifestyle of the millennium. The natural shades of tan, brown and classics such as black were substituted by the season's colors such as coral with sand, pistachio with banana, aqua with burnishing in beige, apricot, pistachio, light blue and pink. The bags show details such as enamel embossing on metal pulls, metal pieces and perforations. The designs still lean toward minimalism to show the finest materials and leathers to their best advantage.

Last year, business grew by 30 percent over the previous year. Even if the economies are jittery, Cinquegrana forecasts 50 percent growth in a few years.

He attributes the increase to more sales per square foot in stores. The busiest outlet is at the Peninsula Hong Kong where the Japanese snap up the products. The growth is due to both increasing demand and supply. Loewe's factories have to work double time to replenish the stock.

The top seller is the Ante Oro, the suede collection with leather trimmings that come in juicy colors. The butter-soft napa leather is also a favorite.

Getting Cuban-American Narciso Rodriguez to design the ready-to-wear helped build excitement for the label. RTW now forms 25 percent of the business.



THE LLORET bag from the Barcelona collection is characterized by strong resistance and is covered with cowhide with a distinct embossing. The leather is inspired by the cracked effect of the Catalan Modernist Ceramics, which creates a peak/valley effect and furnishes the bag with a two-tone appearance. The summer version mixes leather with canvas.

Desirable

Undoubtedly, marketing plays a big role in its success.

"Marketing has not been the driving force up until the past few years for most luxury companies. Before, luxury products appealed to a small elite group. Today luxury has become more accessible to a large number as economies become wealthy. To reach a wider group, you have to be good in marketing. It's no longer enough to have good products," says Cinquegrana.

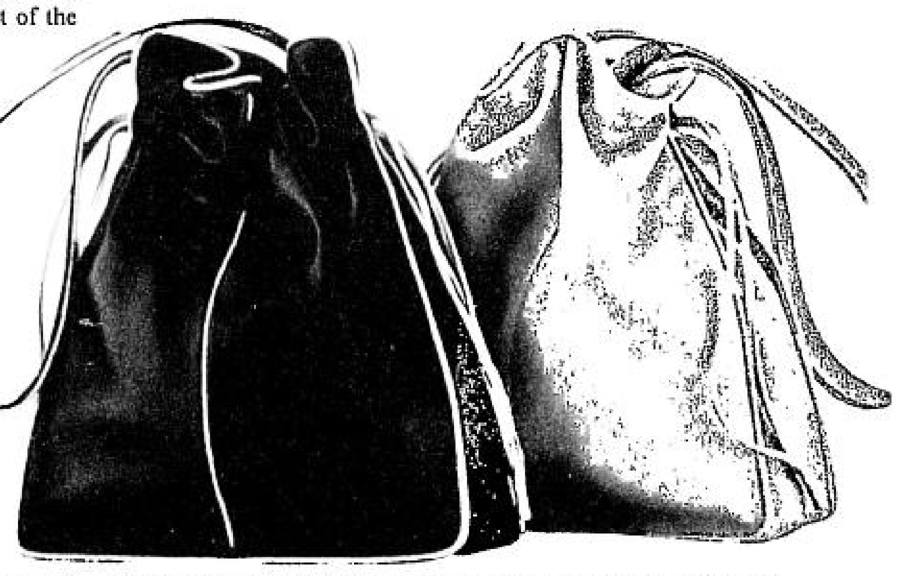
Loewe's challenge is to position itself as a desirable brand without compromising its luxury status. "You want people to know you're exclusive. At the same time you want to reach a large number of people," Cinquegrana says.

The sister company is an example of brand that's a household name yet it's considered status symbol.

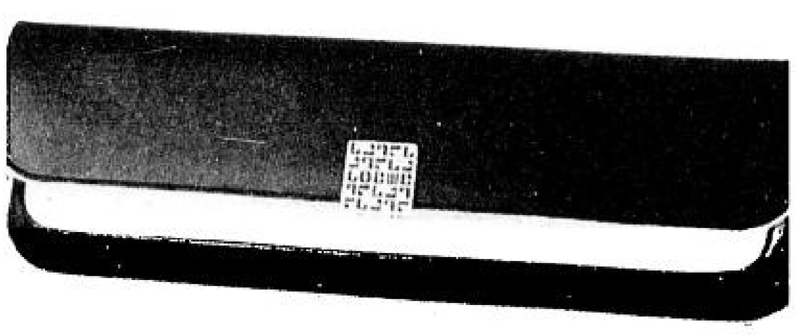
"They haven't lost their desirability as they've grown. That's the key to what you need to be doing," Cinquegrana explains. "There's only one Louis Vuitton. Everybody looks toward Vuitton but it's very difficult to replicate something like that. What we need for Loewe is desirability.

"What you see at this point is an up-and-coming brand that maybe in the future could be a Louis Vuitton. Bigger isn't always best. We don't want to be the biggest but we want to be the best loved."

METAL mesh bag, smooth and enameled in black



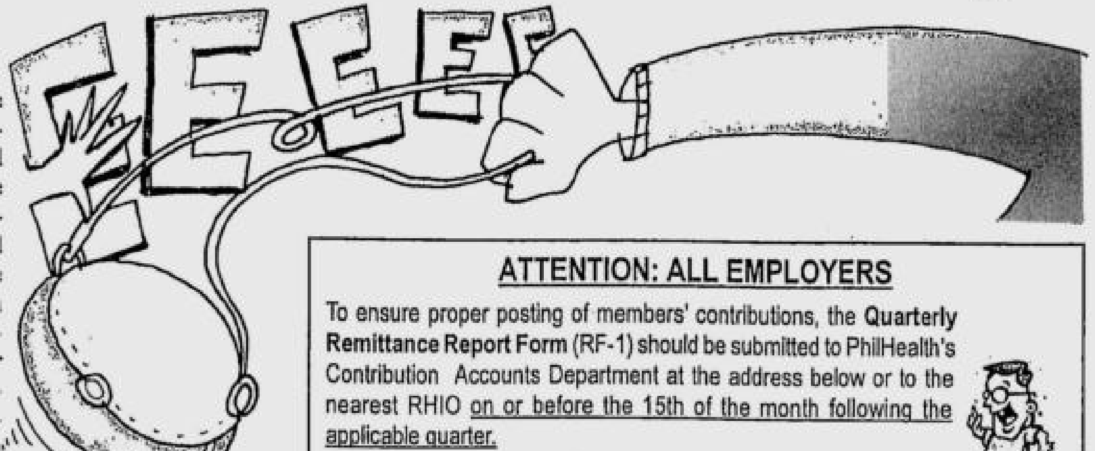
LOEWE'S trademark drawstring bag done in soft napa leather



ELONGATED clutch is another retro look. The boxcalf bag comes in a color that contrasts the bag's flap and trimmings.

How we lost money to non-politicians

(From page D1)



which was already on low-bat. This was one instance when you could really slam a computerized call-receiving center. Before you could reach the right local, Citibank's answering line must have enumerated a global directory of services—if this were a matter of life and death (and in some moments, credit cards are a matter of life and death), you would have already landed in the crematorium before you could reach customer assistance. Companies offering 24-hour customer service must really put their emergency local right in the beginning of their computer-programmed spiel to spare us from having to know their latest credit features. It will spare them from a lot of curses and could generate customer goodwill. It is not only service to the consumer; it is also a needed display of common sense—which I have realized is not that common in the corporate world.

Anyway, back to my forced learning experience. As I told friends my crime-induced epiphany, I was surprised to learn that most of them—men and women, but mostly women—have lost their bags or wallets to snatchers or dips at least once. Such stint with petty crime is like a skeleton in your closet, which you keep hidden in social circles unless coaxed out by similar experiences of friends. You don't want to be exposed as stupid—which you are, even for a split second—or careless, which you are quite often.

Their mini-horror experiences, which cut across genders and social classes, must be enough to fill a potential Philippine bestseller ("We Lost Our Money to a Non-Politician" or a similar title).

For instance, our colleague **Alya**, with strange pride, calls herself the "Snatch Queen." Name the circumstance, she said, she's lost a bag somehow. Once in a packed jeepney, she put her bag on her lap (where else?) and hugged it. Then this man beside her seemed to be dozing off and leaned on her. She didn't know her bag had been slashed until she got off the jeepney and its content spilled out on the street, and her first writer's fee of P2,000 was gone (which generous publication was that?).

INQUIRER's **Marge**, who must attribute such misfortune to the planetary transits, lost her bag while on a bus in San Francisco—a man got on the bus and grabbed it, just like that, and hopped out.

Our other colleague **Freida** put her bag between her and a closed window in the resto. Also, the usual distraction, and when she looked it was gone.

Another put her bag—again in a resto—down between her legs under the table. A well-dressed man stooped and snatched it; she caught the guy.

Still another left her bag on the table in a restaurant, to be watched over by her mom, as she stepped out to call their driver. As she was walking back in, she saw a woman carrying a bag similar to hers; she stopped the woman. It was her bag all right, snatched as her mom was distracted.

Another friend, **Cora**, who's learned her lesson many times, now makes it a point not to bring any bag to her ballroom dancing. And when she's driving, she even puts the bag underneath the seat, just in case.

Another doesn't put her cards in the same wallet as her cash.

Gem of wisdom

What I learned from these fellow victims is that when in a public place, such as a resto or even a restroom, you don't separate your bag from your body, not on the seat, not even on the table or underneath it where you think you can see it. In a restroom, you don't put it on the hook where an arm could reach over and grab it.

In all instances, there will always be distraction, and their hand is quicker than your eye.

A young friend has a gem of wisdom for women weary of bag-snatching: "Better yet, pick a date who can't take his eyes off you and your bag—at the same time." Tall order.

Meanwhile, speaking of setbacks, my friend **Ces Drilon**, the journalist among broadcasters who must be in a philosophical mood, shared with me another gem of wisdom that's saving her from depression these days: "Setbacks are a golden moment for opportunity. Mine them." I don't think she's speaking of bag-snatching though.

I like to end this week's column on a note not of snatching, but of giving. One of the e-mail I got on last week's column about **Kit Zobel** and her education project is from **Alain Antonio**, a volunteer for the Entrepreneur Volunteer Assistance (EVA) Charity Foundation.

His group, he said, sends Aetas to school, from preschool to college. It is headed by a British national, **Jennifer GR Wallum**, who has lived in the country for 17 years and has taken up the cause of helping "our indigenous Aeta brothers and sisters from Pampanga, help themselves."

Not only are the Aetas sponsored through college education, they are also required to do community service for a year by teaching their fellow Aetas how to read and write. The Foundation also gives small loan with zero interest to encourage Aetas to become entrepreneurs.

The Foundation is preparing for a charity event to raise funds for a water system and clinic for Aetas in Haduan, Mabalacat, Pampanga. It will be an art exhibit at the Australian Center in Makati from May 3-9, and will feature the works of EVA members Jennifer Wallum, **Carole Lee**, Alain Antonio and Aeta artist **Gilbert Cuero**. Those who want to help can access www.e-v-a.homepage.com—their website.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@link.com.ph

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To ensure proper posting of members' contributions, the **Quarterly Remittance Report Form** (RF-1) should be submitted to PhilHealth's Contribution Accounts Department at the address below or to the nearest RHIO on or before the 15th of the month following the applicable quarter.

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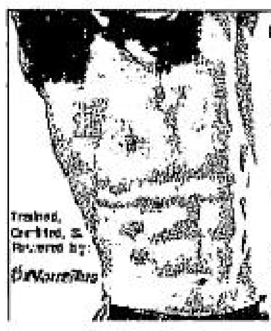
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0309, Series of 2001



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Reflections on the Lotus Pond

STONE, wood and terra cotta imbues in us a warm feeling.

By contemplating the variety of shapes, colors, textures, scents and sounds in this garden, one can regain the sense of 'oneness' with nature

BY ADRIAN V. LIZARES
PHOTOS BY CHITO VECINA

WHAT make people strive for a better quality of life? Everyone contemplates these questions pretty much at any level. Soul searching is no easy task. Self-mastery might become a keyword in one's existence. And if one should persist, then the results would be extremely fulfilling.

Some people are born lucky by being blessed with the instinct for making life uncomplicated. Unseen by many, the processes into simplification maybe short for some, and a roller-coaster ride for others. There are challenges waiting along the way. Nurturing your qualities is a must.

So how does one reach that peaceful state of mind? One must possess the intention to be tranquil, or if in lack, adopt it as a virtue. And as there is no simple solution, let us look into this piece of earth in Tagaytay as an example of one that has gone through the processes into tranquility.

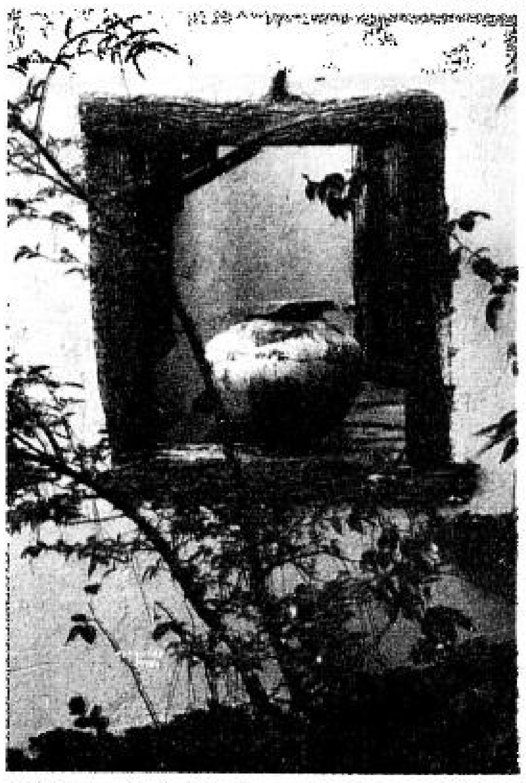
Tranquility

The landscape of Baby Valencia, better known as the author of the Lotus Pond, contains all the necessary components that make for such an existence. There is space, clearly defined, restrained to a certain degree until nature takes over its natural course.

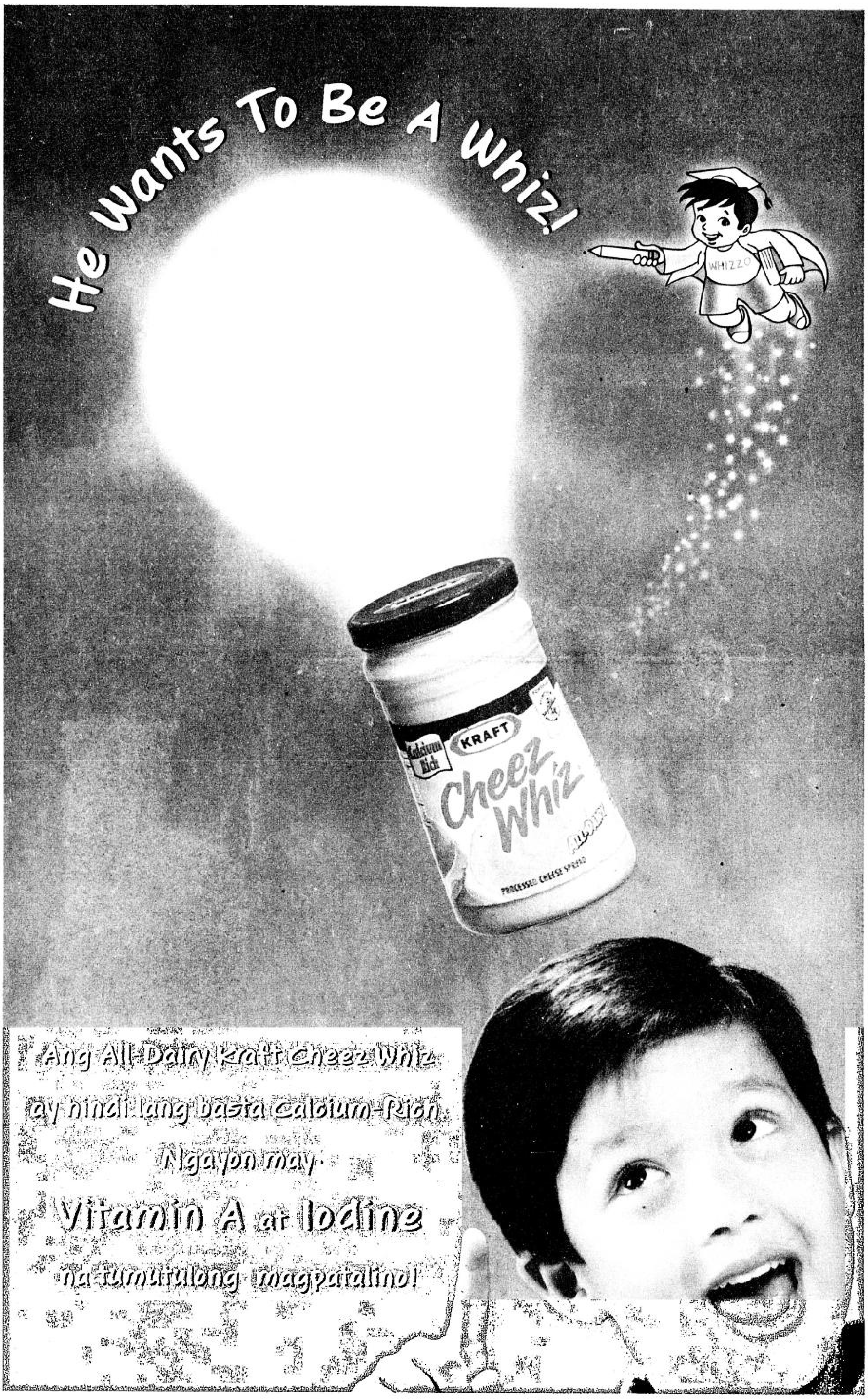
In this garden, deliberate positioning of plants, stone and wood in methods utilizing color, form and function produce the desired effect: They enhance and complete the space. The structures are separate from one another and spread out into the environs.

A walk from the bedroom into the kitchen is a sensual experience. Fragrant blooms waft the air. You pass through a *tableaux vivant* of a window framed in wood and caressed by candlelight. Feel the soft grass under your bare feet lit by nothing but the moonlight and surrounded

REFLECTIONS/ p.E2



THIS woody shrub is from China. Its miniscule blooms smell like apricot.



TATLONG HAKBANG PARA PANGITIIN MO SILA.

Reflections on the Lotus Pond

A RESTING spot before the gazebo

(From page E1)

by nothing more than silence. Inner peace is achieved by immersing yourself in this healing feeling. Pensive isn't it? But it is this deliberateness in the lady's surroundings that provoke such thoughts.

The name Trining is carved on a rock formation that greets you upon the entrance. The fence is nothing more than two wooden beams hitched to posts that run along three sides of this properly.

On the remaining perimeter is a gorge with a creek beneath it, a natural boundary. Beyond it is an expansive view of open fields with Mount Batulao in the distance. Facing directly west affords the owner the various episodic sunsets, a rare treat if your property sits right next to the ridge in Tagaytay. Trining is the name of the lady's mother who, alas, did not live to experience this garden.

The guest house is the building nearest the entrance. It is a wooden bungalow that is simply a spare bedroom surrounded by wide verandas. Its antique balcony railings are pieces rescued from other old Filipino houses. *Molave* posts and floors add warmth and will probably make this house last more than our lifetime. However, I am impressed more by the scent of gardenias wafting from the windows through pierced wood work

Spiritual ambience

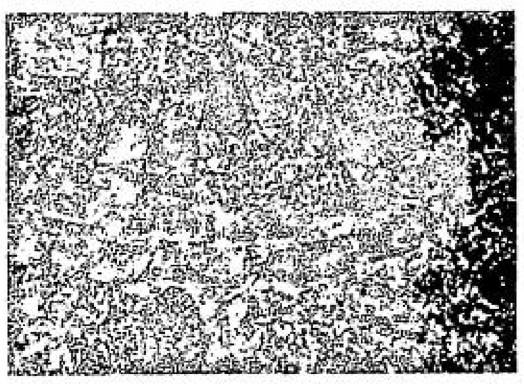
The owner's quarters is a two-story affair, done in very much the same principles as the guest house. It is here where the chatelaine lives. Aside from the balconies, there is not much more besides the bedroom, bath and an enclosed sun room. You can see her rich heritage from the things that surround you in this quarter. Artworks abound; heirlooms, too. But then again there is that garden that surrounds you. Each step into the house—well, if one can take a closer look more than I—is such a feast!

THE DINING pavilion

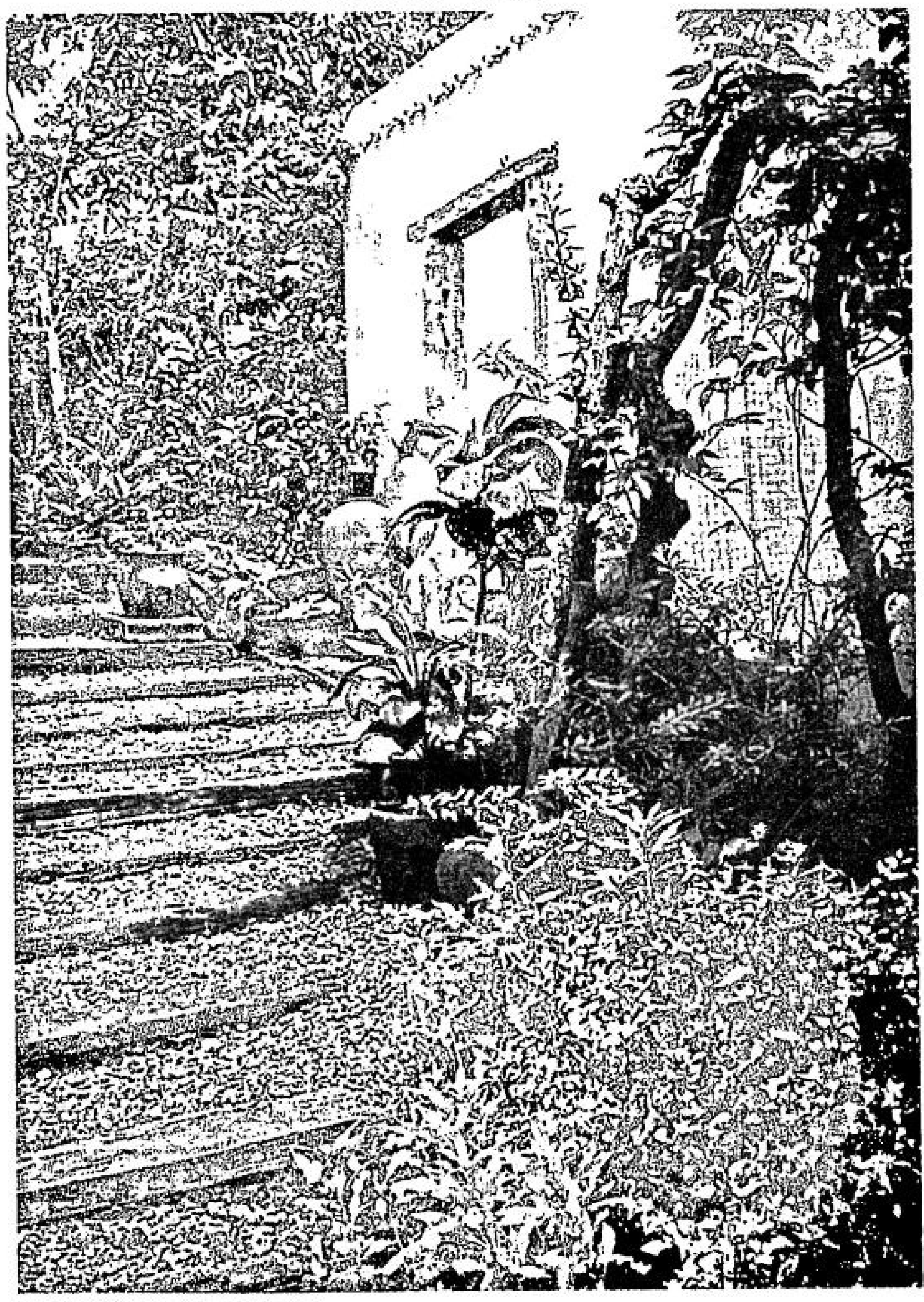
Forget the pressures that life imposes and savor the sensual delights: the sensuality of rambling passion flower vines, the sporadic "kling-klong" of the wind chimes, the nostalgia of old-fashioned plants, a bamboo grove that catches the wind, and the romantic sunset.

Oh, those scented plants! I know one of these had come all the way from China, a woody shrub with tiny white flowers that smell of apricot. Another reminds me of watermelon bubble gum. The sun room holds nothing more than

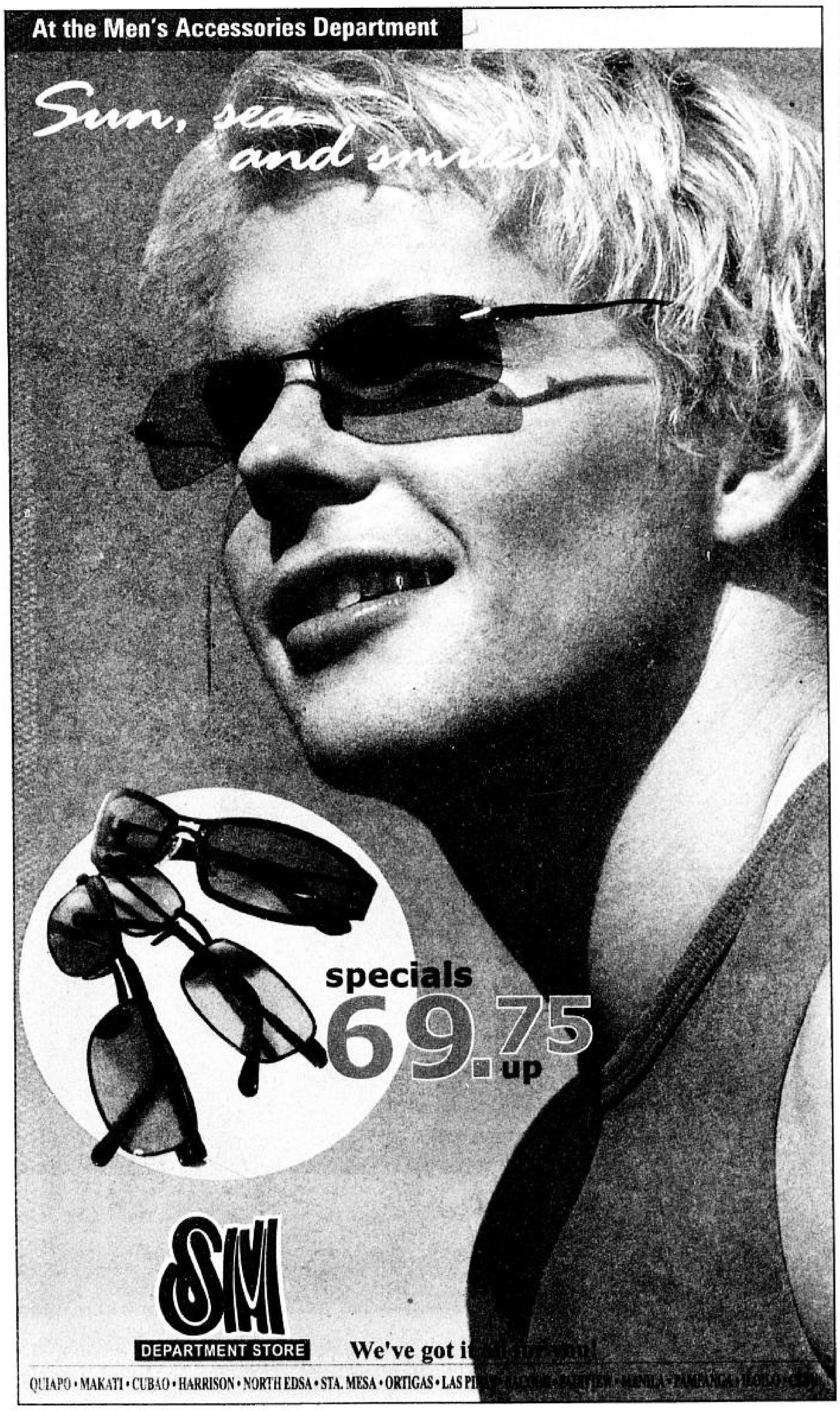
REFLECTIONS/ p.E4



DINING pavilion flooring of paving stones and pebbles



ENTRANCE into the main house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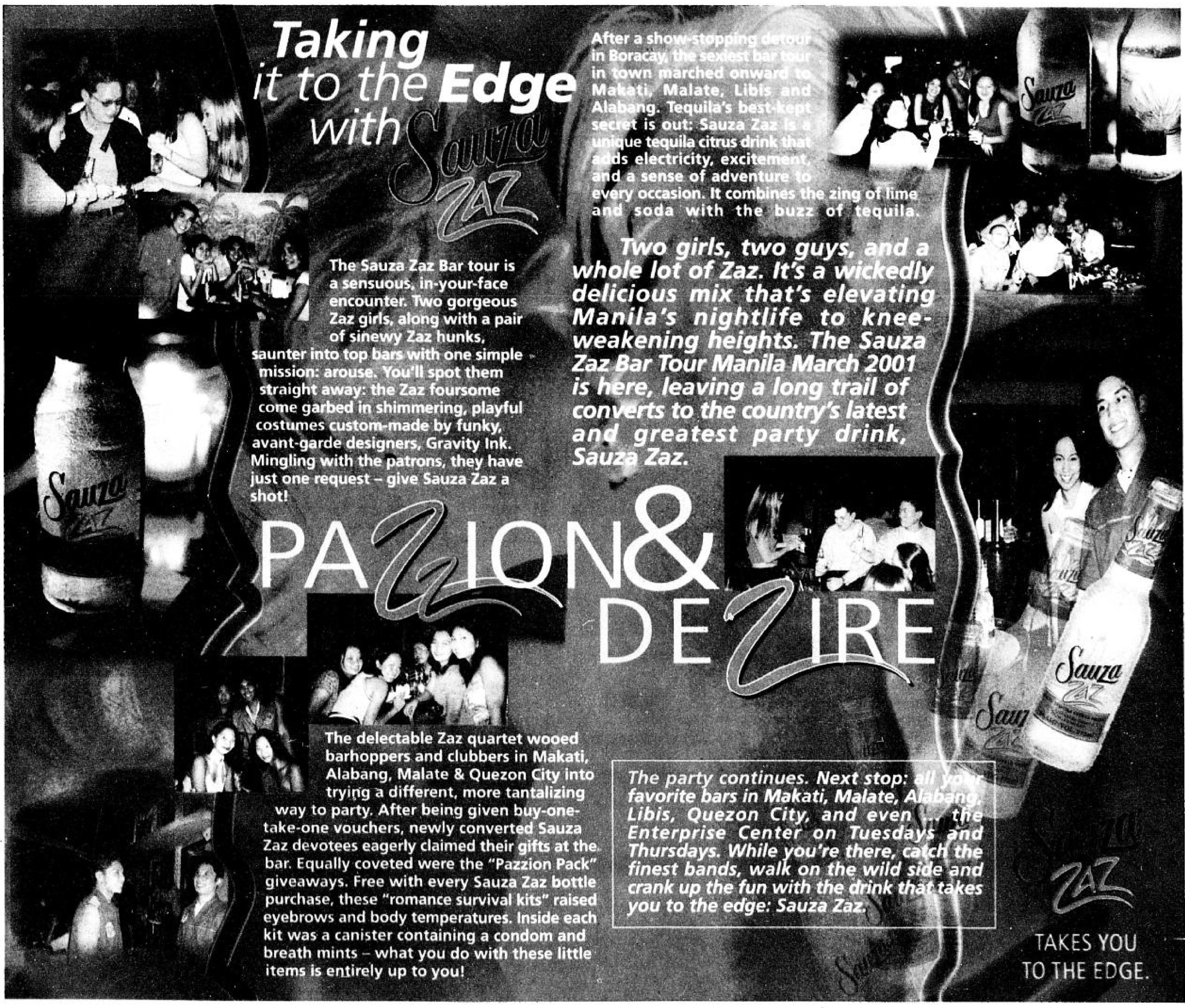

Taking it to the Edge with Sauza Zaz

After a show-stopping detour in Boracay, the sexiest bar tour in town marched onward to Makati, Malate, Libis and Alabang. Tequila's best-kept secret is out: Sauza Zaz is a unique tequila citrus drink that adds electricity, excitement, and a sense of adventure to every occasion. It combines the zing of lime and soda with the buzz of tequila.

The Sauza Zaz Bar tour is a sensuous, in-your-face encounter. Two gorgeous Zaz girls, along with a pair of sinewy Zaz hunks, saunter into top bars with one simple mission: arouse. You'll spot them straight away: the Zaz foursome come garbed in shimmering, playful costumes custom-made by funky, avant-garde designers, Gravity Ink. Mingling with the patrons, they have just one request – give Sauza Zaz a shot!

Two girls, two guys, and a whole lot of Zaz. It's a wickedly delicious mix that's elevating Manila's nightlife to knee-weakening heights. The Sauza Zaz Bar Tour Manila March 2001 is here, leaving a long trail of converts to the country's latest and greatest party drink, Sauza Zaz.

PAZZION & DEZIRE

The delectable Zaz quartet wooed barhoppers and clubbers in Makati, Alabang, Malate & Quezon City into trying a different, more tantalizing way to party. After being given buy-one-take-one vouchers, newly converted Sauza Zaz devotees eagerly claimed their gifts at the bar. Equally coveted were the "Pazzion Pack" giveaways. Free with every Sauza Zaz bottle purchase, these "romance survival kits" raised eyebrows and body temperatures. Inside each kit was a canister containing a condom and breath mints – what you do with these little items is entirely up to you!

The party continues. Next stop: all your favorite bars in Makati, Malate, Alabang, Libis, Quezon City, and even ... the Enterprise Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays. While you're there, catch the finest bands, walk on the wild side and crank up the fun with the drink that takes you to the edge: Sauza Zaz.

Sauza ZAZ
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Step 2: Tatawag ngayon ang nagpapadala para sabihan sa tatanggap kung ano ang halaga ng perang ipinadala.

Reflections on the Lotus Pond

THE SUN room, rustic feelings from weathered woodwork

GARDEN furniture designed by the Chatelaine

(From page E2)

junipers and rosemary.

One can distinctly feel this spiritual ambience, emanating from everything you look at, touch smell and taste. There are vegetable patches strewn all over especially around the kitchen. All the ingredients for a mean *guinatan* are found within the property.

Ideals

This piece of earth encompasses all the ideals we tend to look for in a garden. It is rich but devoid of giddiness. There is no love of excess for we know how tiresome that could be. Everything is in abundance, but the effect is, well, very subtle.

It does look and sound easy, but one does not achieve all this without a facing a certain degree of challenge. Coming to terms with oneself is a constancy until we reach our own equilibrium. Think of life as a garden. You nourish your virtues, talents and relationships to make them grow. You learn from the losses by finding replacements for them, or banish these forever. You harvest the good from what you have planted.

In gentler landscapes, we view ourselves differently. And some of our problems may seem less upsetting. The magic works slowly: The more we spend time in a landscape, our worries ebb.

But then, where is the lotus pond?

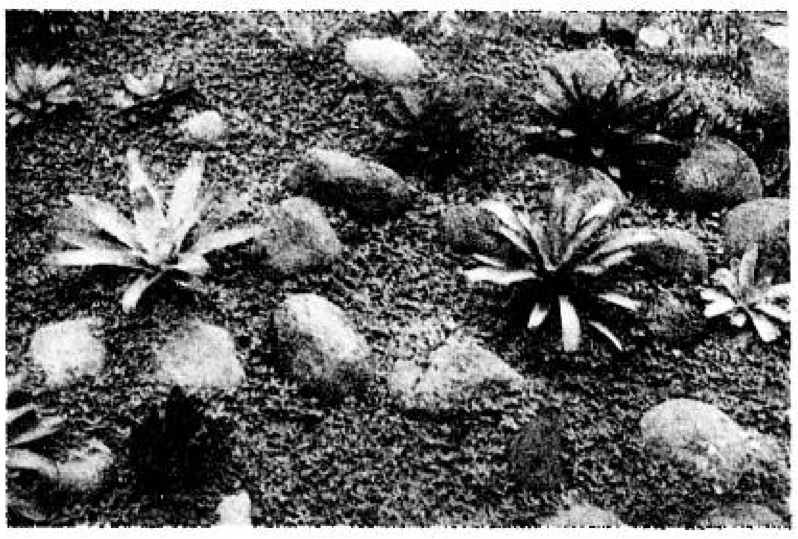
E-mail the author at adjie@pacific.net.ph

STREAKED weathered pieces of wood form a barrier that creates another ground level.

ACACIAS provide shade for the gazebo.

PRECIOUS heirloom as garden ornament gazes back into the main house.

REFLECTIONS on a *kawa*



DELIBERATE plantings can produce this contemplative composition.

A BAMBOO grove on the pathway to the main building

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Bird sanctuary in Pampanga estate

A RESIDENTIAL estate, which offers a lot of natural enhancements including an island sanctuary for migratory birds, is a big first in real estate development in this country.

This is the Lakeshore Project in Mexico, Pampanga, now being developed by the Central Country Estates Inc. (CCEI), which has just received its Environmental Compliance Certificate from the DENR, and license to sell from the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB). The Lakeshore is designed as an integrated community where residents have easy access to recreational, shopping, dining and business-oriented needs within its premises. The setup is expected to reduce traffic in and out of the estate.

Its developers envision the community as a nature haven. Some 5,000 ornamental and fruit-bearing trees, as well as other plants, all propagated in the estate nursery, will fill parks and garden areas. The Lakeshore has allocated 50 percent of its salable grounds to open spaces.

Its centerpiece is a 12-hectare man-made lake planned for non-motorized sports. The island within it is designed as a sanctuary for migratory birds. The birds, according to the CCEI, regularly migrate into the rice fields of Pampanga from China in search of warm refuge during the cold months. The birds are called *tagaks*, said to belong to the swan species. When the lake is finished, the birds are expected to flock to it in bigger numbers.

Making room for these migratory birds is only part of the Lakeshore's environmental plan, which includes traffic inflow, health and sanitation, prevention of water pollution and environmental hazards.

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

Don't throw away those soft-drink containers

IN THE MIDST of the garbage disposal problem, comes the news that a corporation's recovery program for soft-drink containers is now in place. This will minimize the amount of garbage dumped in landfills, and help solve the problem, even if only partially.

Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. (CCBPI) has set up recovery centers for post-consumer PET (polyethylene terephthalate) and aluminum soft-drink containers. There are 13 recovery centers designated in different branches of three supermarkets—Tropical Hut, Walter Mart and Liana's Supermart, which are open on Saturdays and Sundays, 9 a.m.-12 nn.

The rescue value for each empty PET bottle or aluminum can is 50 centavos.

PET containers are those light and clear plastic bottles used as containers for various household and consumer products. They have been proven the easiest to recycle. Once recovered, a PET container is ground into pellets which are then exported to other countries where they are made into second-generation products such as non-woven garments, carpets, fabric for jackets and sweaters, athletic shoes, cassette tapes, automotive parts and many others.

With the landfill issue still unresolved (or even if a solution is found at last), recycling the CCBPI way may yet offer the most practical, doable and even profitable alternative. Once they realize that the containers are redeemable, consumers will learn the value of recycling, and hopefully make a habit of it.

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The office becomes a haven of knowledge with ergonomic chairs and desks for the daily grind. Files are kept in order with sturdy cabinets. Add a cozy touch to work with fluffy rugs and carpets imported from Australia.

Get the best of East and West with the wide selection of furniture imported from Malaysia, Taiwan, Italy, Singapore and Australia. Filipino craftsmanship is also part of H.O.T.'s showcase, with choice pieces sourced from all over the country. If those aren't enough, you'll be tempted to completely redecorate with the really affordable prices.

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Cell phone pirates are everywhere

IT is alarming how cellular phone thieves will do anything to steal phones. They can be so ruthless as to kill and harm victims who refuse to let go of their phones.

The PDI correspondent in Cebu, who was stabbed by a cell phone snatcher, is just one of many victims. Here in Manila, a woman employee of the National Bureau of Investigation was recently stabbed right in front of the NBI gate when she threw her cell phone instead of yielding it to three robbers! Before that, a student of UP Diliman was fatally knifed when she refused to give her phone to her attackers.

We don't even have to go far to cite cases of cell-phone theft. PDI employees and visitors have endless stories to tell. On separate incidents, for instance, three PDI employees had been victimized by motorbike-riding snatchers while they were waiting for their rides in front of the INQUIRER building on Chino Roces.

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

Somewhere in Makati's traffic-clogged streets, the wife of photographer Chito Vecina had just opened the car window to get a better signal when a man swooped and snatched her phone away.

Lifestyle editorial assistant Belle Bondoc had several stories. She recalled that her sister was inside an FX shuttle when a man opened the door and just grabbed her cellular. Luckily the thief missed the phone, but he made off with her bracelet instead.

Entertainment columnist Leah Salterio placed her Nokia 8210 phone on the table at the wedding reception of her brother. It just disappeared. Grace Santos of the photo department greeted a neighbor who had just come out of his door when a man on a bicycle snatched the neighbor's phone.

We have yet to hear the end of the stories at the PDI office.

Tips to victims

Here are some tips from Globe and Smart on how to avoid cell phone theft: Don't display your handset in public. Turn it off or put it on silent mode when you are in a public place or conveyance.

If you are a subscriber or a plan holder, immediately inform the phone company about the loss of your handset. The SIM card number has to be blocked and disabled right away so the thieves or their buyers cannot make calls or transactions and charge the bills to your account. Globe's 24-hour call-in service is 730-1000 or 211 toll free from Handyphone.

Smart 24-hour hotlines to customer service are 888-1111 or *888 (cellular number).

Smart requires an affidavit of loss and formal letter while Globe just needs you to answer questions before disabling your SIM card.

Praises to Globe

Joey G. of Geo-logistics is all praises for the speedy action of Globe's 24-hour customer service.

He wrote: "A bag slasher stole my Nokia 7110 at 4 a.m. while I was on a jeepney plying Santolan Road, San Juan. When I got home, I immediately called up Globe's call-in service to report the loss of my phone and request blocking of the SIM card. To find out if my card had been disabled, I called up my number. It had already been blocked.

"I was also instructed to go to the Globe office so I can get a new SIM card for my new phone. They only charged me P300. I thank Globe's efficient employees."

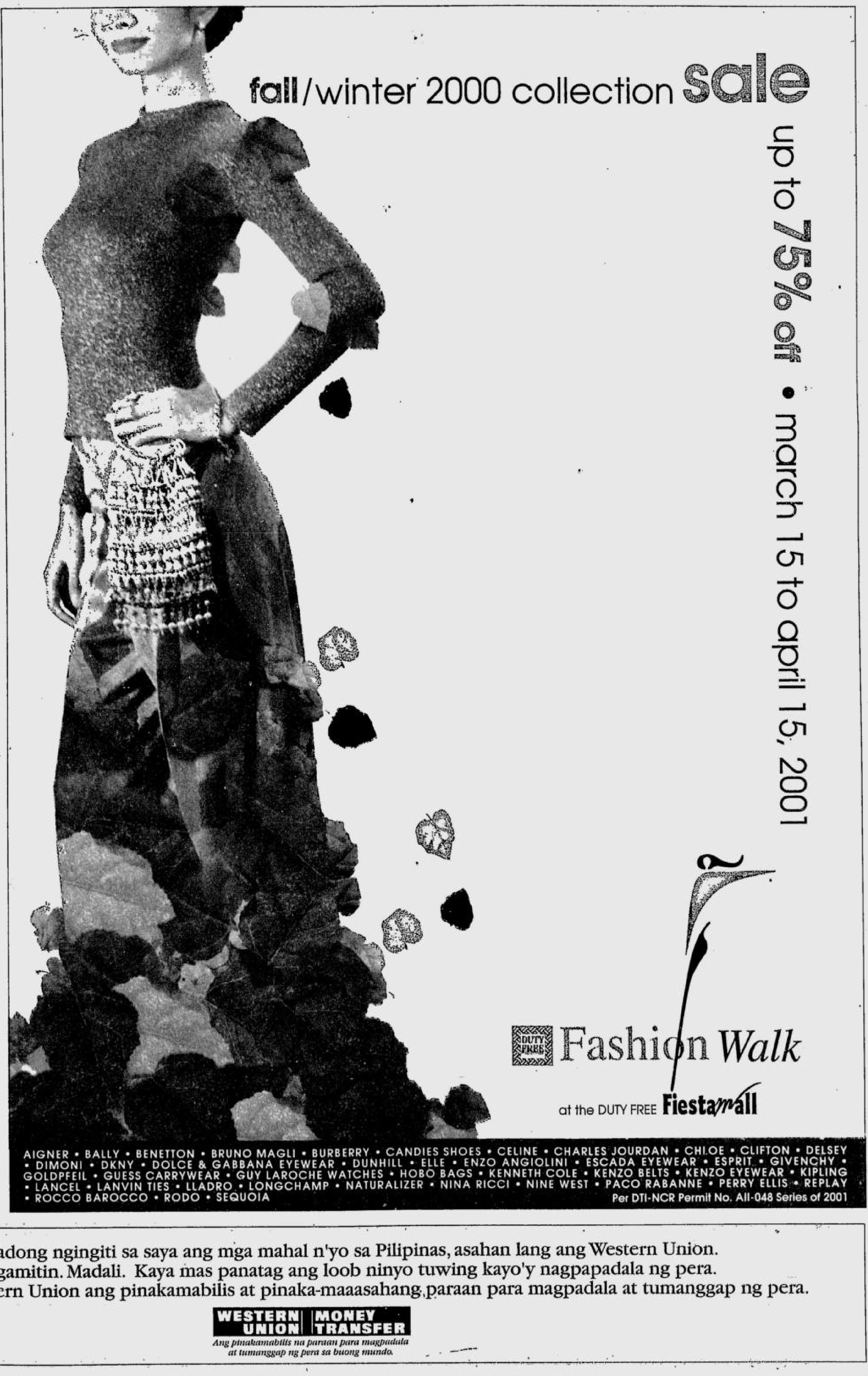
Raffle prize: used Nokia

N. Ronin (liamronin@yahoo.com) wrote to inform Unilever about the used cellular phone that was supposed to be the prize of a raffle held last December in Tacloban City, Leyte.

He wrote: "We submitted empty sachets and boxes of Close-up toothpaste to join the contest. When the winners were finally announced, we were so excited to find out we were the proud owner of a Nokia 5110. When we claimed the prize, however, we discovered that the box of Nokia was already open and the sticker seal was transferred to one side of the box. The handset was dusty and it had all the signs of being used. It was not only fully charged when we opened it, but the name Velarde appeared on the screen.

"Unilever should be informed about this. I am sure that Unilever will not award used cellular phones to its contest winners."

E-mail the author at mgiron@csi.com.ph.



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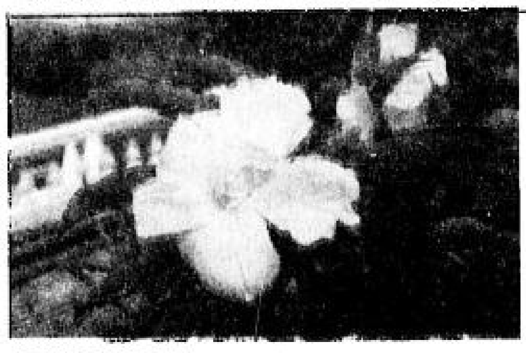
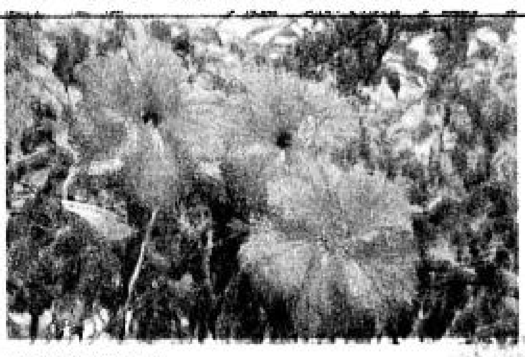

ALLAMANDA flowers

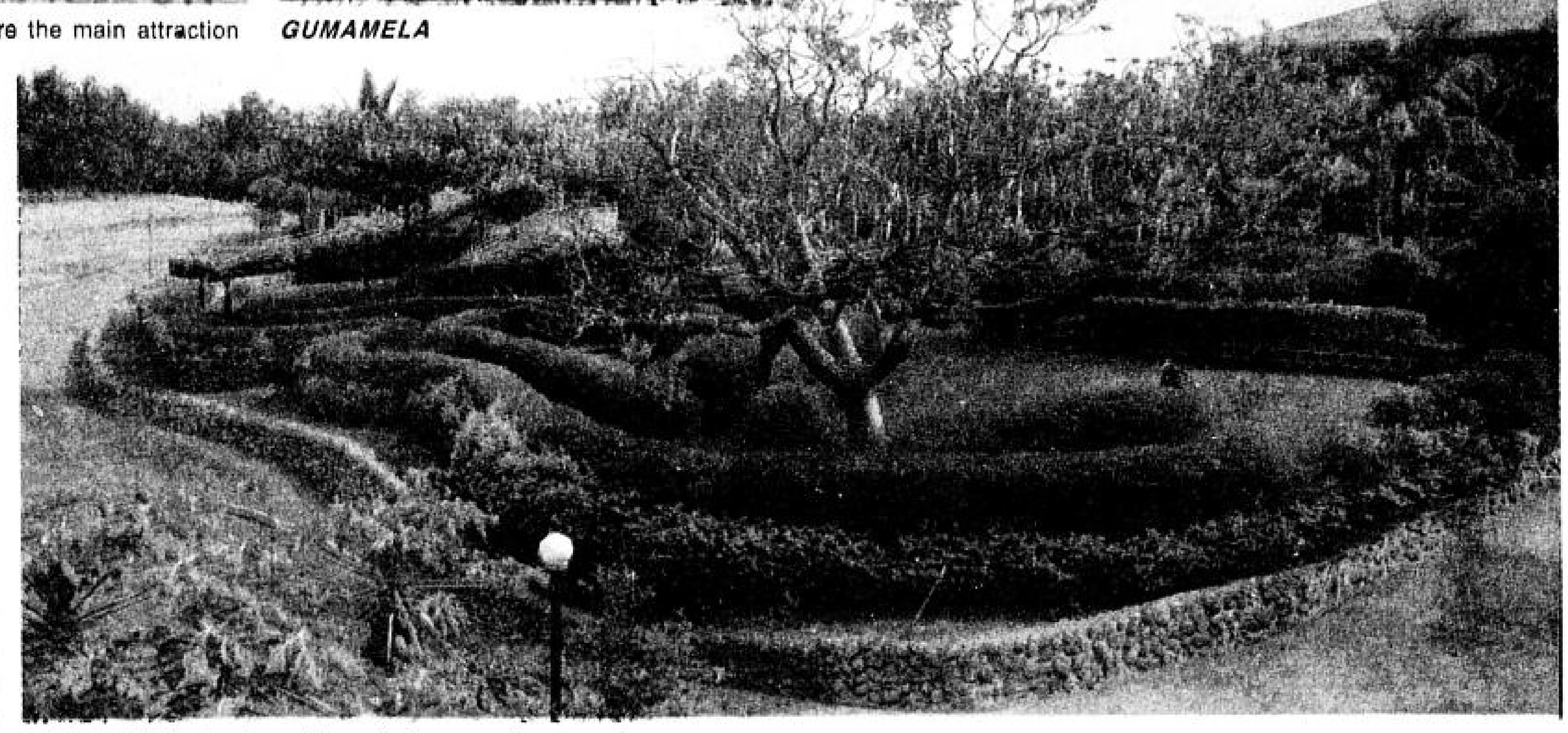
BOUGAINVILLEAS are the main attraction


GUMAMELA

Fort Ilocandia in Laoag aims to have the largest and most beautiful desert garden in Asia

Garden on sand dunes

By Tita V. Giron
Photos by Toots Soberano


ORNAMENTAL shrubs and trees thrive on sand

"IN THE WHOLE of Asia, we have the most beautiful garden on sand you will ever find," brags Fort Ilocandia's resident manager Franz Weber. The resort hotel in Paoay, Ilocos Norte was built on the very same sand dunes made famous by the movies of Fernando Poe Jr.

We dared not dispute the claim of the manager who showed us the center court garden. All over the place are stunning views of flowering vines, ornamental plants and ground covers. On elevated plant boxes are giant sunflowers that tower over peanut carpets covered with little yellow flowers.

The focal point is the impressive water fountain near the entrance. With the backdrop of bougainvillea vines on brick walls, it is evidently the favorite spot for picture-taking by hotel guests. At night, it is even more dramatic with lightscaping effects and the sound of moving water.

But the scene-stealers are the bougainvillea vines with red and white flowers that drape the arches along the brick-covered walkways. There are six varieties, and more will be added, Weber tells us. "Bougainvilleas are prolific bloomers and are low-maintenance plants," he adds.

Other low-maintenance trees and plants are found around the hotel grounds. One hardy tree, the local *bagbag* (*dapdap*) at the swimming pool area, is a sight to behold with its flaming orange flowers. And, like palettes of colors are patches of flowering yellowbells, *chichiricas*, *gumamelas* and marigolds.

"What our guests don't know is that we grow vegetables for the kitchen," discloses Felimon Tagapuen, head officer of Hotel Ilocandia's Greenland Department. He showed us the organic vegetable garden at the back of the hotel. We did not expect to see plots of radish, cauliflower, *pechay*, tomato, carrot, melon and chive.

Surprisingly, they grow cutflower plants as well. "We use the flowers for the coffee shop." Tagapuen points out that they do their own garden recycling and composting. "We also gather driftwood for the hotel's mini-zoos so we don't have to cut down live trees."

Maintaining a garden on sand is not easy. According to Tagapuen, they had to buy truckloads of topsoil to spread on the sand so plants and trees would grow. "We just purchased 2,500 cubic meters of garden soil to cover 1 hectare of sand for the new green area."

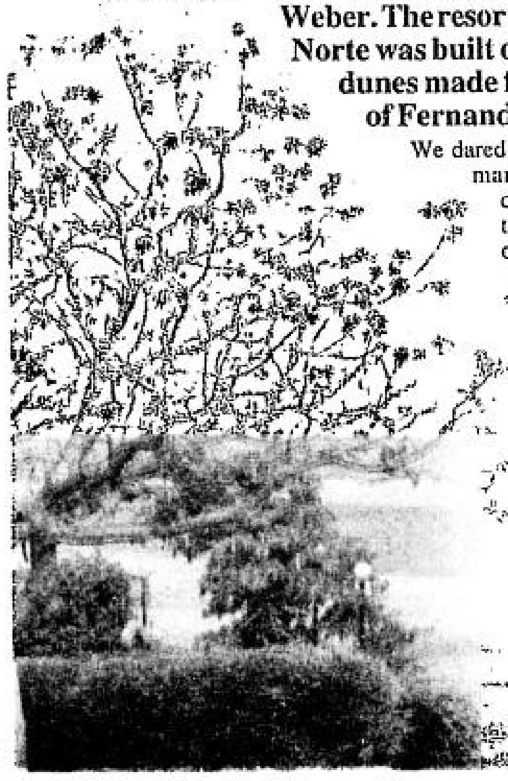
In addition, fringe areas around the hotel had to be planted with trees to control soil erosion. These included hundreds of *agoho* and weeping willow trees in the inland areas. "We will plant more coconut trees along the beach," Tagapuen says.

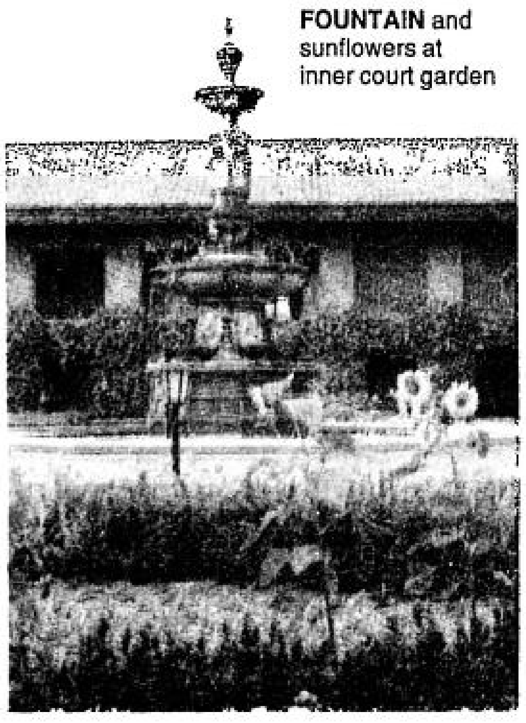
Water supply is not a problem, he explains. Although the sea is just a stone's throw away, the supply is not contaminated with seawater. "We are lucky. At 20 ft, we can pump good ground water," he explains. The gardens are watered from 2 to 11 p.m.

Weber and Tagapuen estimate the hotel area at about 77 ha. They say the garden occupies about 7 ha but when the development is completed, there would be 10 ha in all. "The objective of the owners of Fort Ilocandia Holdings Company is to improve the green areas."

Right now, there are 40 members in the garden staff. "We plan to add more workers when we go full swing with the expansion project. When it is finished, Hotel Ilocandia will be the largest garden resort hotel in the whole of Asia," Weber concludes.

Call Fort Ilocandia at (074)772-1166 to 70, local 2050.


FLAMING tree (Dapdap) at recreation area


FOUNTAIN and sunflowers at inner court garden

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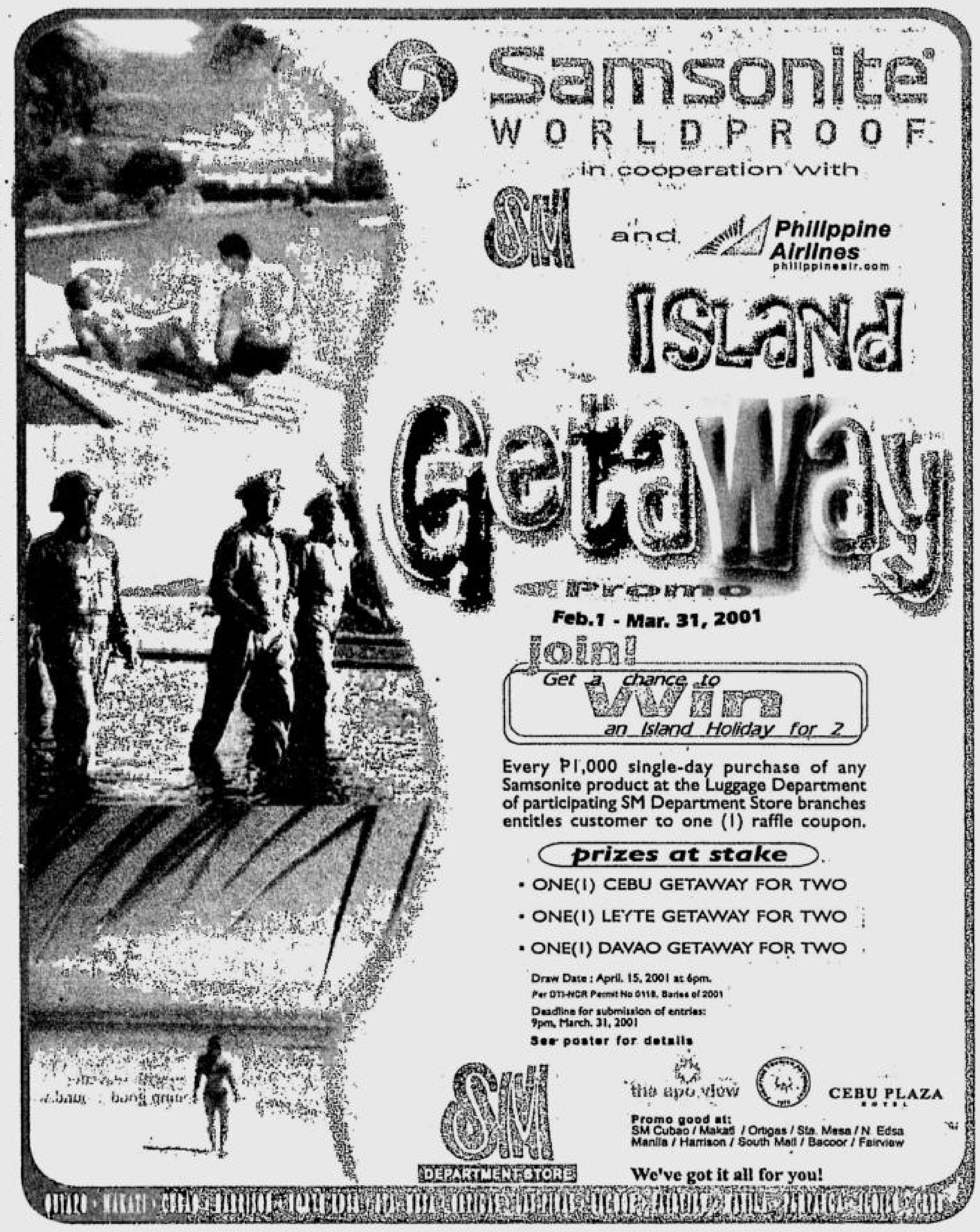
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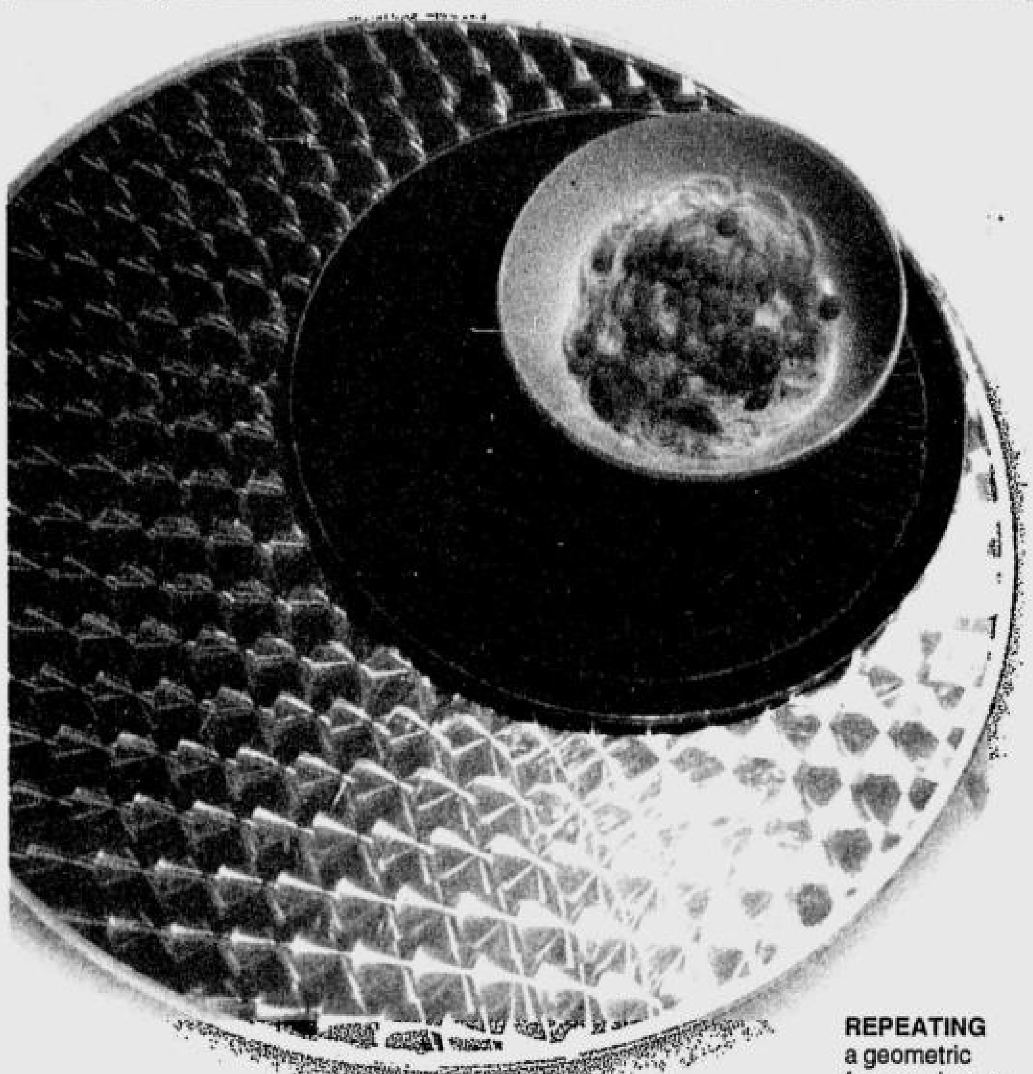


REPEATING a geometric form such as a circle is one way to style food.

A culinary reputation comes full circle

By Marge C. Enriquez
Photos by Chito Vecina
Pictorial direction by Albert Avellana

WHY are people attached to certain foods? Aside from the craving for salty and sweet things, people indulge in foods that elicit pleasant memories or past associations. Thus, the term "comfort foods."

Comfort food is usually eaten under a situation that obtains psychological reassurance. It's usually the food cooked at home or lovingly prepared by friends and relatives rather than the tasty, processed food.

To culinary expert Margarita Araneta Fores and partner Alvin Lim, their lives spin around food. She runs three outlets of Cibo and he comes from a family of foodies. They enjoy shopping for kitchen cutlery, gadgets and equipment together especially in Echague. Alvin also sources for Solingen knives and watches cooking shows on TV.

They'd cook meals together either in his place or hers. Inevitably they have taken the comfort food concept into Café Bola, their new restaurant at the Araneta Arcade. The menu, the quality of service and the location connect past associations with family or events important in their lives. In essence, Café Bola is about links.

Six years ago, when Alvin first met Margarita in Giraffe, he revealed that his ideal woman should be a great cook. Since he had just arrived from the United States, he was clueless about Fores' reputation as an Italy-trained chef who had been getting the thumbs-up from food critics.

Since they are both Ariens, they are attracted to each other's ideals and sheer zest for living. Inevitably they would consummate their relationship in a business partnership called Arriete Projects. ("Ariette" means Aries in Italian.) There's no hierarchy in this company. Both work on equal terms.

Alvin's associations

Alvin comes from a family of foodies. Past associations come to mind when food is discussed. When he helped in the family business in Cagayan de Oro, the father would get ingredients from the garden and cook great meals. The siblings enjoyed stewing, grilling and sautéing. His father cooked pot roast in a clay pot for lunch. His sister made sandwiches with cream cheese, salami and strawberry jam.

His dad would enter his room at night and invite him over to the kitchen to experiment on foods. As a child, he would make brownies with cashews and pop it into the oven.

When he studied at Woodside Priory, a California boarding school run by Benedictine monks, he got involved in active sports such as soccer and basketball. Between studies in banking and finance at California State University in Hayward, he would pump iron and run around the tracks.

Because of his passion for fitness, he balances the Epicurean pleasures of food with the discipline of healthy eating. He got Margarita turned on to workouts and nutrition and is partly responsible for the great shape she's in today. Over lunch, he gives a discourse on how to load on carbohydrates every three days and the natural hormonal enhancement system.

Full circle

Café Bola started out as a fluke. The Araneta Coliseum, run by Margarita's clan, had been undergoing major renovation. Starbucks Coffee was opening in the new arcade. There was space right beside it.

Since Ariens thrive on challenges, Margarita and Alvin opened Café Bola. The name Bola carries a lot of significance aside from the circle as a symbol of prosperity and eternity.

Margarita started her culinary career as a consultant of sorts in her uncle's Trattoria in the family-owned Ali Mall. She opened her Cibo restaurants in Makati, Ortigas and Alabang. With a new concept in the family turf, Cubao, she has come full circle. The walls are lined with photographs taken during the construction of the Araneta Coliseum with her grandfather, J. Amado Araneta, at the helm.

Café Bola pays homage to the *lutong-bahay* and the *almondigas*, a Mexican meatball recipe of Alvin's mother.

"It's basic ground beef, stewed in onion and tomato sauce. Friends would always eat this and say, 'This is so good!'" says Alvin.

He and Margarita thought it would be a good idea to come up with a restaurant serving this recipe.

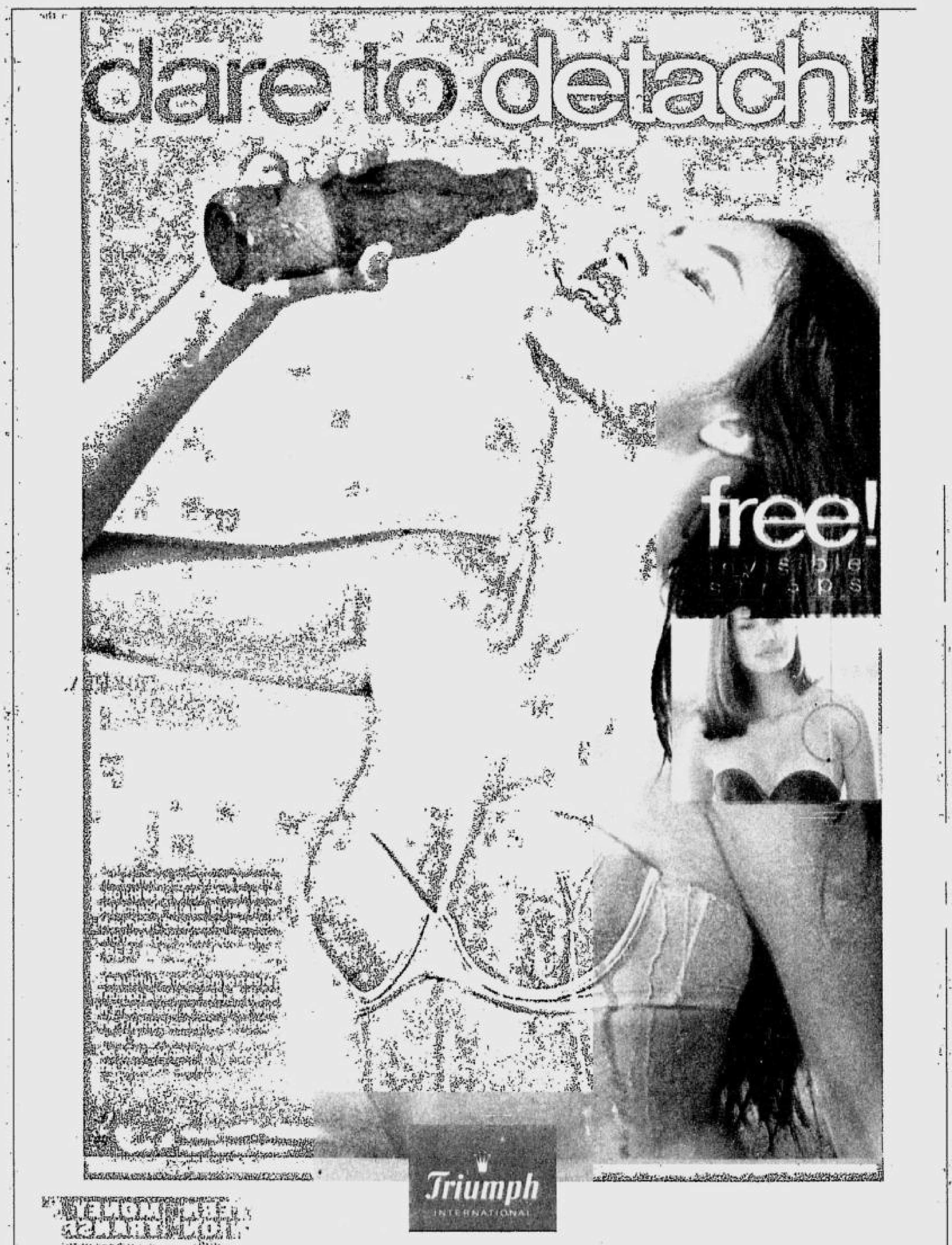
Everything in the menu reminds you of the food you grew up with. The restaurant boasts of huge servings of *bolas*, made of chicken, beef or seafood, on a fluffy mound of rice.

Pasta caters to the more sophisticated palate. A diet-busting meal costs less than P100. These *bolas* are served with five different kinds of sauces that are flavorful and aromatic. The classic tomato sauce flaunts a sweet taste that's so Pinoy with a hint of onions.

Pepper jelly

The spaghetti is dressed in five variations of sauces—with *kesong puti*, basil, tuna and olives, Parmesan cream with bacon. The most expensive dishes (P145) are the penne with *tocino* and vegetables and *chorizo* with Parmesan cream. The spaghetti loaded with fish roe, baby crab fat and asparagus is another bestseller. The sandwiches are as low as P55. They come with homemade shoestring potatoes that evoke childhood memories of the famous junk food in a can. An alterna-

A CULINARY/ p.E8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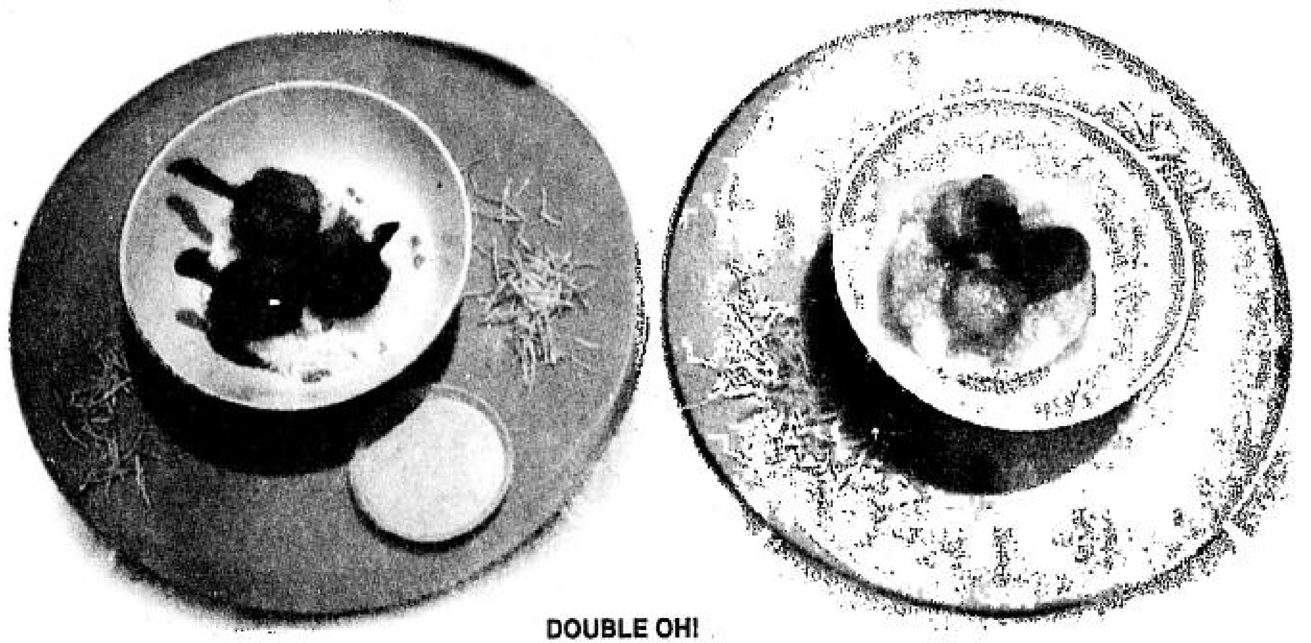


DOUBLE OH!
Chicken lolli-balls with pink mayonnaise and seafood *bola* with sweet and sour pepper sauce. The home-fried shoestring potatoes evoke childhood memories.

A culinary reputation comes full circle

SMILES OF EXUBERANCE. Alvin Lim and Margarita Fores

(From page E7)

tive is the taro chip that is cut finely and tastes like heaven.

Ordinary meals are made into restaurant specials. Alvin recalls childhood days when the siblings would cook corned beef themselves for a quick fix or glaze Spam with butter and sugar until it has got this caramelized coating, and served with rice and egg.

What could be more Pinoy than *adobo* flakes with *kesong puti* on rice, Ilonggo-style *chorizo*, sirloin corned beef loaded with garlic rice and fluffy egg, crunchy sirloin *tapa* with *acharang ubud*?

"Although it's not too imaginative, it sells," says Alvin. The kitchen staff prefers his version of rice—lots of *tutong*. The place also introduces the unusual pepper jelly from Guam with cream cheese in a bread, especially made for Café Bola.

Finer points

Alvin teaches the staff the finer points of cooking that he learned in his youth. Frying meatballs is not just a matter of mixing ground beef and herbs into a ball and dumping them in oil.

Since the market is different, don't expect the fancy cheeses such as gorgonzola, gruyere or brie. The Café uses cheddar and *kesong puti*.

Margarita invented an interesting dip made from *kangkong* and cheddar, served with egg *pan de sal*.

The desserts are cheap (P35-P50) and classic such as the fruit salad with tapioca, apple crumble with double cream and tiramisu made from the traditional *broas*.

Café Bola just doesn't attract the late-night crowd that comes for a nightcap after watching a show or a game at the Coliseum. Anyone who feels harassed or wants to pamper himself can enjoy the comforts of *lutong-bahay*.

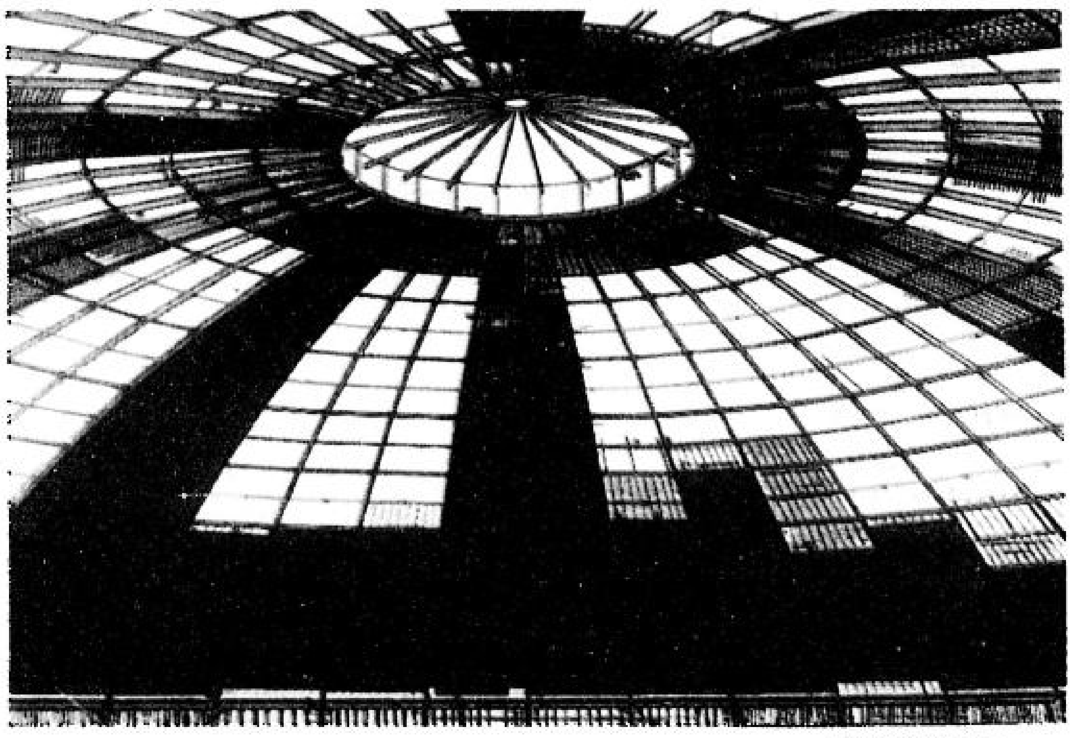
Call 913-2928 for reservations.

With pal Alvin Lim, Margarita Araneta Fores, the woman behind Cibo, has opened a new restaurant that makes delicious virtue out of comfort food

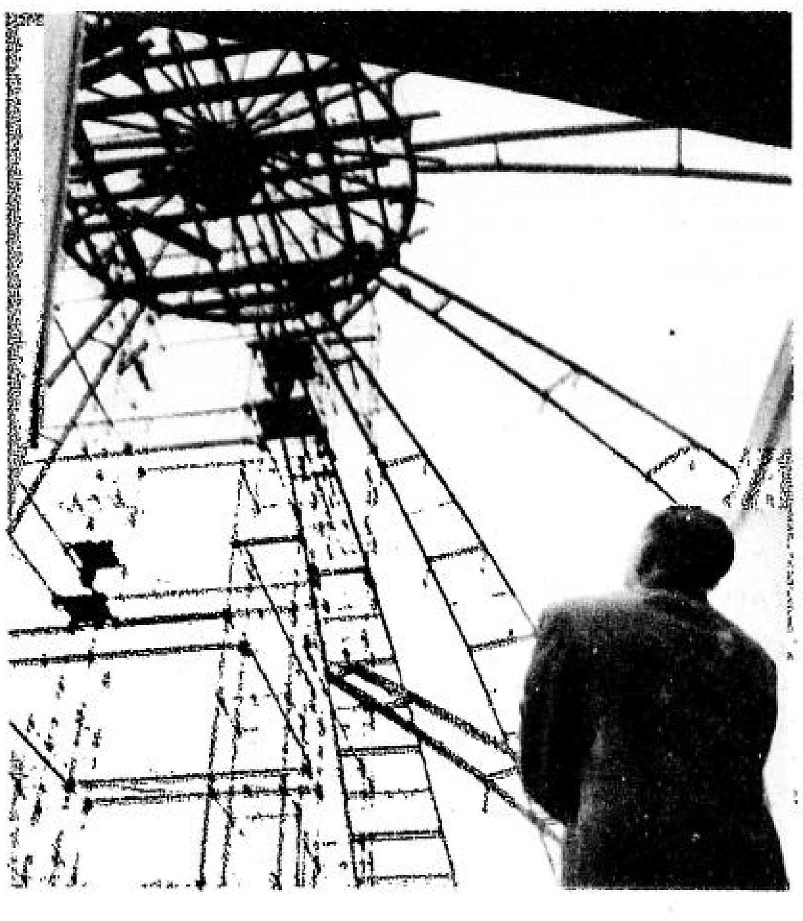
THE VIBRANT colors and the expansion of the Araneta Coliseum show the dynamism of the new generation of Aranetas who run Cubao.

THE HOT colors not only stimulate the appetite but also reflect the Arien energies of the owners. The circular lighting fixtures echo the restaurant's theme of round foods.

GLAZED
Spam on a mound of fried egg and *sinangag*



THE BIG Dome in 1959



J. AMADO
Araneta, the man who built Cubao, inspecting the construction in 1959.

MESSAGE

Establishing the Centex village

AS viewers of **The Music of Dreams** *enjoy the music in tonight's concert at the Philippine International Convention Center, they will also help many young children realize their dreams and fulfill their potentials.*

Beyond just providing high quality education to less privileged but exceptionally bright children, the Center of Excellence in Public Elementary Education (Centex) is more importantly a project that empowers the children and helps develop future leaders for our country.

The first Centex school was launched in 1998 in Tondo as a partnership among the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), the City of Manila and Ayala Land, Inc. After three years, the Centex-Tondo students topped national exams administered by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports and won several major competitions. We are confident that the newly opened Bauan, Batangas campus will produce the same results. Centex-Bauan is a partnership among DECS, the Provincial Government of Batangas, Globe Telecom, and Pure Foods Corp.

Centex takes a holistic approach. Nurturing goes beyond academics and forward-looking curricula. It provides programs for nutrition and for self-esteem building. These, after all, are prerequisites to leadership. Centex also involves parents by teaching them how to provide the right environment for learning and growth.

We, in the Ayala Group of Companies, are proud to be the first corporate partners of Centex, and yet we know that the effort must be shared with other companies. We are happy that ABS-CBN has agreed to partner with us in **The Music of Dreams.** We envision many more Centex campuses and we hope other organizations will consider becoming corporate partners for future Centex campuses as well.

They say it takes a whole village to educate a child. In the Centex context, that village is comprised of a whole community of teachers, parents, corporate sponsors and generous individuals all of whom share the vision of better education and better opportunities for all the Filipino children.

We invite you to be part of the Centex village.

Fernand + Kit

FERNANDO AND KIT ZOBEL DE AYALA
Centex volunteers

This concert will fulfill the dreams of many bright kids

WHEN some children of the Center of Excellence in Public Elementary Education (Centex) sing onstage this Friday at the Philippine International Convention Center, their appeal to the audience will be particularly poignant.

The Music of Dreams *musical director Ryan Cayabyab has made sure of that. This advocate for the right of children to fulfill their potentials has chosen as opening number a song he and scriptwriter Joey Reyes wrote for the school for less privileged but exceptionally bright children,* "Kung Ako'y Pagbibigyan." *The pure, sweet voices of the Centex children chosen for the part will find its mark with these lines:* "Kung kami ay bibigyan ng pansin, kung pagbibigyan ang pangarap, kay layo ng kayang maibalik (if we were to be given notice, if our dreams were to be fulfilled, we would have so much to give back)."

The Music of Dreams is a concert top-billed by Pops Fernandez as host, Regine Velasquez, Lani Misalucha, Basil Valdez, Jaya, Agot Isidro, Lisa Macuja, and Audie Gemora. They are performing for a minimal fee in the concert co-produced by Ayala Foundation and ABS-CBN for the benefit of Centex.

"You can't get these artists everyday," says director Johnny Manahan of the powerhouse cast. Only a great cause – in this case Centex — can conquer all the sensitivities, scheduling problems, and what-have-you artists harbor and get them together on one stage, he says.

Says Cayabyab, who together with wife Emmy, Gemora and Luna Inocian, conceptualized the show: "Centex is all about developing one's talents and our show is about actualizing potentials." **The Music of Dreams** *puts together fresh, young talent with polished and developed artistry.*

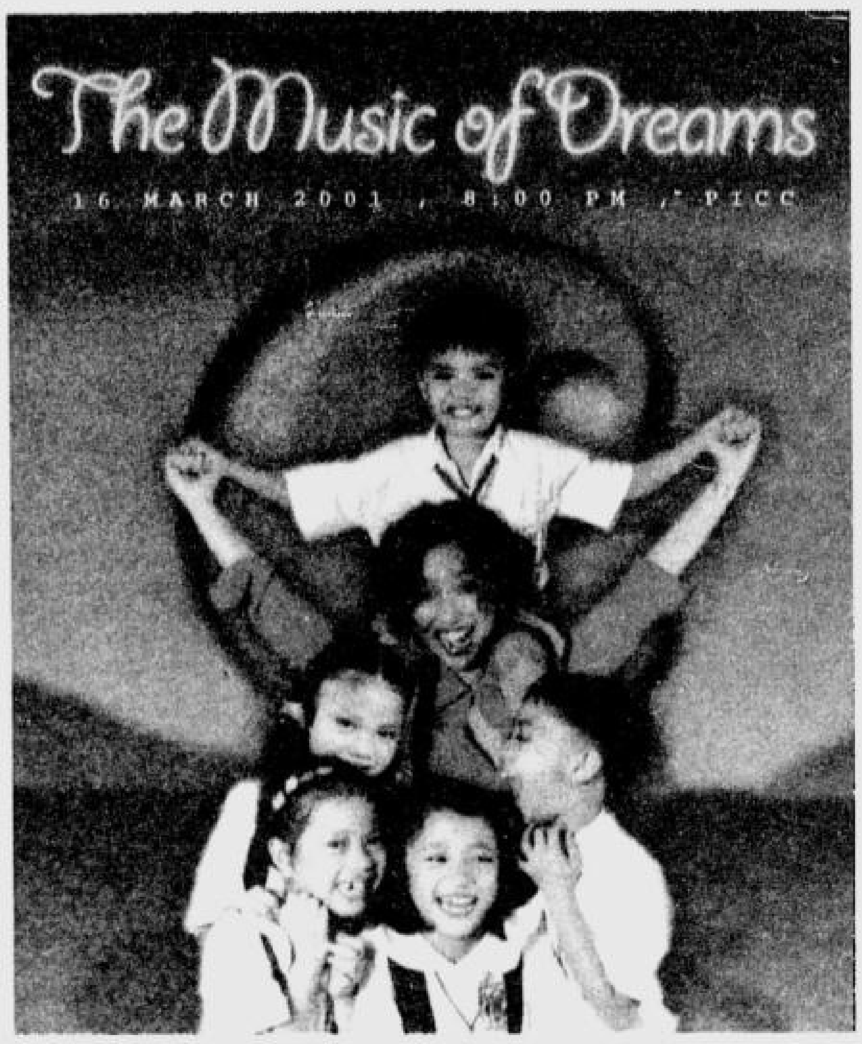
Both Cayabyab and Manahan anticipate creating a concert to remember with the powerhouse cast and the 50-piece Manila Philharmonic Orchestra. According to Manahan, working with the MPO is a "once-in-a-millennium opportunity."

At a recent rehearsal with Ryan Cayabyab at an ABS-CBN studio, the children from families headed by construction workers and messengers and who had never been to an orchestra performance in their entire life, gave a glimpse of their promise. They had previously been shown pictures and reading material on the various musical instruments.

The six- and seven-year-olds stared with wide-eyed wonder at the assembled MPO practising under the baton of Cayabyab. Uncoached, the moment of great realization occurred: Teacher, that's a French horn... a hobo... a timpani, a harp. "Ang laki pala ng harp. Paano nila iyan, inuuwi?"

Gathered before the *piano, the legendary "Mr. C," which is Cayabyab's showbiz honorific name, played the tune of "Kung Ako'y Pagbibigyan" for them for the first time. After three or four more times, they were easily carrying the tune:* "Kung kami ay bibigyan ng pansin, kung pagbibigyan ang pangarap, kay layo ng kayang maibalik."

They couldn't have said it better.



Jaya and other divas shed their pop image to sing songs of hope for the children of Centex.

> "You can't get these artists everyday," says director Johnny Manahan of the powerhouse cast. Only a great cause — in this case Centex — can conquer all the sensitivities...

EDWIN TUYAY

Ryan Cayabyab, musical director of the The Music of Dreams, will perform tonight together with the Centex children a special song he wrote together with scripwriter Joey Reyes.Photo: Edwin Tuyay

Leadership begins in kindergarten

"FEARLESS" is how Center of Excellence in Public Elementary Education (CENTEX) project director Carol Atacador describes pupils at the newly opened campus in Bauan, Batangas. Not more than six years old, the boys and girls who stepped into school for the first time only last October have learned to voice their opinions confidently as they eagerly go through a storybook with a teacher.

"They are not afraid they will be dismissed or rejected for giving the wrong answer," observes Atacador. CENTEX has seen to that by training teachers to encourage students to speak out. Centex also fosters the attitude that a different answer may not always be a wrong one. "We want our graduates to be the leaders that our county needs them to be," stresses Atacador. And according to her, a key trait of a good leader is confidence in his opinion and certainty in making judgements. The Centex approach, she is certain, will cultivate that confidence in them.

CENTEX-Batangas, located in Bauan, is actually the second in a series of schools that CENTEX hopes to put up all over the country. A collaboration among Ayala Foundation, Inc., the provincial government of Batangas and the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), CENTEX-Batangas is funded by Globe Telecom and Pure Foods Corp. The first CENTEX school, a joint undertaking of Ayala Foundation, Inc., the local government of Manila and DECS, is generously supported by Ayala Land, Inc.

Providing equal opportunities to the marginalized is the over-arching objective of CENTEX-Batangas. It offers its students, who come from families earning an average of P7,000 a month, quality elementary education at par with the country's best private schools. This will give kids from poor families equal footing when competing for scholarships in high school and later on in life.

CENTEX-Batangas hopes to provide a model teaching environment for public schools . Two teachers are assigned to every 25 students to allow more teacher-student interaction and classrooms are equipped with updated learning modules and tools. CENTEX-Batangas also prides itself in having an advanced curriculum. Although the students are still taught the basic subjects like Math, English, Science and History, Atacador explains that teachers are trained to integrate all the subjects rather than compartmentalize them.

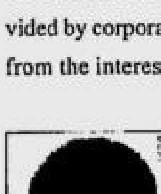
"We teach them that science does not happen in 40 minutes," she says. "But rather that life is an integrated event including Science and Math, History and English." Making the connection between what is learned in school and what goes on outside, she continues, facilitates faster learning. In the area of reading, for instance, the students are expected to learn the skill in a matter of months despite their having had no previous pre-schooling. It takes at least a year for a student in a regular private school to begin reading.

The school selects the students based on a pre-test administered to applicants, admitting only the highest-scoring 75 children—superior, above average and high average IQ. This high academic potential is easily translated into academic achievement.

"We want to expose our students to more than what rural life or the inner city can offer," explains Atacador. She goes on to say that CENTEX graduates will be trained to be globally competitive but at the same time, innately and proudly Filipino. CENTEX graduates, she says, will be servant leaders who will always go back to serve their own communities.

Acknowledgements

Francisco H. Licuanan III, president of Ayala Land, Inc., championed the program to provide quality education to public school children by establishing the first Center of Excellence in Public Elementary Education in Tondo. He believed that giving less privileged but exceptionally bright children an opportunity to develop their potentials, they would have much to give back to society in their adulthood. Mr. Licuanan ensured the sustainability of the first Centex s chool and others to follow by introducing the idea of setting up endowment fund for each institution. Under this scheme, the endowment fund is provided by corporate sponsors and the school draws its operating expenses from the interest earned by this fund.



Vicky P. Garchitorena envisioned the school for exceptionally bright but underresourced public school students as a Center of Excellence employing the highest standards and facilities. She harnessed the expertise of well-known educators from here and abroad to draw a curriculum which would hone students to be tomorrow's leaders. She assured the continuity of the Centex vision by winning the support of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, local government agencies and corporate funders for the school. Her leadership up until her recent appointment to the Cabinet of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo has laid the foundation for the long-term growth of the institution.

OUR SPECIAL THANKS TO AYALA FOUNDATION, INC AND ABS-CBN IN COOPERATION WITH GLOBE TELECOM

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THANKS TO DENISE WELDON FOR MOST OF THE PHOTOS OF THE CENTEX CHILDREN

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LIFESTYLE

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BPI SCIENCE AWARDS 2001

FUELING THE ENGINES OF GROWTH AND PROGRESS

BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

Messages

It is my pleasure to greet the outstanding young men and women from all over the Philippines who will be honored as the 2001 BPI Science Awardees in recognition of their excellence in the specialized fields of science.

The coming of the new millennium dictates upon all Filipinos to face the demands of a highly-competitive and technologically-advanced global economy. As we stand at the threshold of change and rapid transformations, Filipinos must gear themselves for these challenges.

Science and technology can help pave the way in transforming our country into an industrialized one ready for the demands of the emerging new economy.

Our science awardees are therefore called upon to contribute their share to industry and national development and to act out their roles as the engine of economic growth and progress. They should be emboldened by an enduring commitment to find new and better solutions to improve the well-being of the people.

I sincerely hope that our young achievers become much more inspired in their scientific research and study and thereby contribute more meaningfully to the improvement of the quality of life of all Filipinos.

Congratulations to this year's batch of BPI Science Awardees.

JAIME ZOBEL DE AYALA
Chairman of the Board
Bank of the Philippine Islands

The BPI Foundation congratulates this year's BPI Science Awardees. We are happy to give recognition to exceptional science students who seek to develop their full potentials.

Dramatic technological changes are rapidly taking place all around us in the world. To cope in this milieu, it is imperative that our country keeps pace with technological development and scientific progress. We foresee that today's outstanding students of science will lead us tomorrow. And for this reason, we have instituted the BPI Science Awards.

Established in 1989, the awards are given annually to top science and engineering students in prime learning institutions in the country. Through these awards, we intend to motivate recipients to be vanguards of progress and to spearhead breakthroughs that will improve quality of life for all Filipinos.

Through these awards, we also celebrate the great potential of these students. We are hopeful that they will actualize these potentials and use their many talents in the service of their nation.

FERNANDO ZOBEL DE AYALA
Chairman
BPI Foundation, Inc.

I wish to extend my sincerest congratulations to this year's batch of outstanding science students who have won the BPI Science Awards.

The Bank of the Philippine Islands is proud to take part in the endeavors of these exceptional students who invest a lot of time and effort in pursuing their goals of using science and technology as a means for progress. It is heartening to know that in this day and age, there are young people who are willing to rise and take on the challenges of these fast-paced times.

Now on its 13th year, the BPI Science Awards has remained true to its ideals of recognizing and encouraging budding scientists and researchers to scale exceptional heights of excellence in their chosen fields. We hope that these awardees will never tire of exploring the depths of scientific research, of charting new territory, of continuing to outdo themselves.

We take heart, for they have expressed their commitment in pursuit of better science and technology; that they are willing to assert their chosen fields as an instrument for national development gives us hope that the country will soon be run by competitive and knowledgeable people.

Once again, congratulations to all the winners!

XAVIER P. LOINAZ
President
Bank of the Philippine Islands

The 2001 BPI Science Awardees

and their insights on the role of science and technology on national development

DON JAIME ZOBEL DE AYALA CONFERS BPI SCIENCE AWARD TO TOP DLSU STUDENTS
The top three science and engineering students of De La Salle University were recognized in awards rites held recently at the M. Gaerlan Conservatory of the De La Salle University-Taft Avenue campus. BPI chairman Jaime Zobel de Ayala was guest speaker during the awards rites. Shown in photo are (from left) Emmanuel G. Herbosa, chief operating officer for Bancassurance and BPI Science Committee member; Bro. Rolando Dizon, FSC, De La Salle University president; Dr. Florencia G. Claveria, College of Science dean; Donna-zea Rosete, Science Awardee for computer studies; Jan Arman Figueroa, Science Awardee; Jaime Zobel de Ayala; Faith Victory Mejor, Science Awardee; Veronica L. Tapia-Merk, BPI vice president for corporate communications and BPI Foundation executive director; Agnes G. Yuhico, DLSU assistant vice president for academic services; and Dr. Raymond Sison, dean, DLSU College of Computer Studies.

ATENEO DE DAVAO UNIVERSITY

Maria Leah Flor A. Alderite
BS Chemical Engineering

"I believe I have already started my journey towards a meaningful contribution in the field of science and technology. The years I have dedicated to studying the principles involved in Chemical Engineering are the tools I shall utilize in helping protect the environment. We must never compromise safety with technology, never let nature be ruined."

Chito Joseph L. de Castro
BS Chemical Engineering

"It is imperative to learn how to utilize technology for the advantage of the human race. Through thorough knowledge of science, we can apply technology to create new inventions which can truly be beneficial to the country. It is through technology that we have robots doing household chores, cars that set off alarms upon the presence of burglars, or even glass pitchers to make our daily morning coffee, hands-free!"

Diane Faith D. Sanchez
BS Biology

"Science is potentially good. It is the way we use and apply it that becomes either right or wrong. Atomic energy is in itself good. But using it to devastate a land and kill many of its inhabitants is wrong. Just as the human brain is essentially a remarkable tool, using it to plot destruction makes it the most dangerous weapon on earth."

ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY

Roselle R. Ambubuyog
BS Mathematics

"Science and technology offers new and exciting opportunities for national growth. Some countries have already soared high in terms of industrialization and modernization. They are economic "tigers," whereas others, including the Philippines, are desperately trying to become "cubs." Science and technology gives any country sufficient leverage to catch up with the giants."

Lito P. dela Rama
BS Chemistry

"In the Philippines, experience proves that not much interest is being given to science. Our culture does not give scientists the same esteem it gives to businessmen, lawyers or politicians. Although scientists are being treated with utmost respect and admiration, people cannot seem to appreciate the impact of a scientist more than the impact of the politician. It is necessary then that the development in science be accompanied by an attitude shift among the people in order to sustain every scientific endeavor."

Paul Ignatius D. Echevarria
BS Computer Science

"In order for science and technology to contribute to national development, it must take into consideration the environment, the communities of people who live in it, and future generations who will benefit from it. It must provide not only for short-term gains, but also for long-term sustainable development. In other words, science and technology must be responsible science and technology."

DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY

Jan Arman D. Figueroa
BS Computer Science–Computer Engineering

"The turn of the century makes us see that information and knowledge has become a commodity and a number one fuel for growth. It is an opportunity that the Philippines should look into seriously. Our country, after all, has a unique and distinct character that is tailor-made for a knowledge-based economy. Progress sits on the science and technology bedrock."

Faith Victory A. Mejor
BS Biology

"Science is so full of possibilities. There have been so many innovations and discoveries and these keep the field constantly interesting and challenging."

Donna-Zea T. Rosete
BS Computer Studies–Software Technology

"The government should train more scientists for the future. There is a need to strengthen support for research and development. It is a life-long investment wherein commitment is vital. Our hopes for development are not in vain for I believe that there are Filipinos who possess the necessary intellectual abilities and the dedication for the cause."

SILLIMAN UNIVERSITY

Cecille A. Monton
BS Chemistry

"I could contribute to society by getting involved in developing chemical treatments that would make wastes less hazardous. As a science student, it is my duty to apply what I have learned

Giselle Ann J. Alcoran
BS Physics

"All Filipinos marvel at the glory of science and technology. But, will this glory remain forever? Science and technology may not only bring blessings but doom as well for it is not only the basis of happiness and comfort but also moral and social degradation. When much is given, much is required."

Ritchie D. Ramos
BS Electrical Engineering

"Science and technology are interrelated. Science is the body of knowledge gained from experimentation and observation. It is a system of knowledge concerned with the physical world and its phenomena, while technology is the application of scientific knowledge to serve man's needs."

ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY

Cheryl D. Agdaca
BS Biology

"Science is so dynamic. It never stops asking questions and trying to get to the bottom of things. It is exact and detailed but open to possibilities."

Jennifer Rose F. Caluza
BS Electronics & Communications Engineering

"Now, more than ever, science and technology encourages us to open our minds to the countless possibilities it has to offer. There is no reason that we cannot take the driver's seat in the field of science and technology. With the concerted efforts of government and the people, I believe that we can liberate ourselves from the clutches of poverty."

Lorie Joy P. Mindaro
BS Information Technology

"Science never leaves a curious mind's questions unanswered. It also offers innumerable opportunities for discoveries and explorations. It does not impose a limit on what one can do. Scientific discoveries and explorations help address the growing needs of a nation."

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES (DILIMAN)

Mark Ian A. Arcedera
BS Computer Engineering

"We are in a technology-driven world wherein almost anything now depends on hi-tech equipment. The ability to create, understand, and adapt technology is essential to the growth and development of a country. That is why it is very important for the government to support science and technology programs so that we won't be left behind by other countries."

Clarina R. de la Cruz
BS Physics

"The product of all scientific and technological undertakings become pertinent only when these are used to uplift the lives of the common Filipinos and not just those of the elite who take control of the rest. The high level of science and technology provide the people the knowledge and tools to judiciously use the material environment for appropriate and sustainable development."

Joseph Ryan A. Victoria
BS Computer Engineering

"The role of science and technology is to teach the people the values of discipline and sensitivity. When people are disciplined, a progressive nation is not far ahead. It is not what is learned in the university that is important, nor is the convenience to man's life brought about by science and technology, but rather, the opportunity of improving one's set of values."

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES (LOS BAÑOS)

Irces T. Galvan
BS Biology

"The Philippines lags behind other countries in terms of scientific and technological advancement but if more students are motivated to do research works, with the help of learning institutions or government, we can prove that notion wrong. I believe in Filipino ingenuity and as long as our researchers and scientists continue on with their works, we can prove that we are worthy to be involved in the scientific world."

Leilani S. del Rosario
BS Agricultural Chemistry

"National development is not only about providing a comfortable life through technological advancements rather, it should be concerned with the improvement of the quality of life of every Filipino, rich or poor and should be, equivalent to sustainable development. There are still problems that used to be addressed by science and technology—pollution, traffic, ecological imbalance, depletion of resources, extinction of animals, famine, drought, and so on."

Ramil G. Mijares
BS Civil Engineering

"I have always been fascinated with engineering because it is a complex combination of scientific theories and principles, practical application and practices. To engineer, after all, is to create. Designing and building structures are worthy endeavors that dignify the existence of man. I want to be a part of that."

UNIVERSITY OF SAN CARLOS

Juvy Anne R. Agravante
BS Biology

"I hope to become a medical doctor and put up a medical facility or a hospital for the needy. I want to work on research geared towards treatments, cure and prevention of different types of cancer. I believe in the immense role of science and technology."

Lecel C. Ando
BS Chemical Engineering

"I'm fortunate enough to learn how important science and technology is and the best way to contribute to its development is to spread the news that science and technology are not just mere words. An educated and interested citizenry is the only thing needed to come up with new technologies that can very well determine the future of our nation."

Giovanni L. Aniñon
BS Chemical Engineering

"I dream of having an advanced scientific training abroad and of becoming an active and recognized member of the scientific community involved in research. I am committed to the advancement of science and technology."

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS

Michael G. Baltisoto
BS Mathematics

"Science and technology make a whole nation more civilized and more progressive. Most of the industries are built on science and technology. I am having fun unravelling the exciting world of science through my learnings in my course."

Ronald Lance M. Mellow
BS Mathematics

"I want to take an active role in nation-building through science and technology. As a future computer scientist, I will lay down a new set of principles that would serve as bases for the research of another person. I will also directly aid the researcher in his quest for scientific development."

Valarie S. Ku
BS Chemical Engineering

"Science is a field that allows mistakes but gives credit only to those who excel. I want others to see that in me. I simply want to be remembered as someone who has set a good example and excelled in her field."

XAVIER UNIVERSITY

Franz Albert G. Go
BS Biology

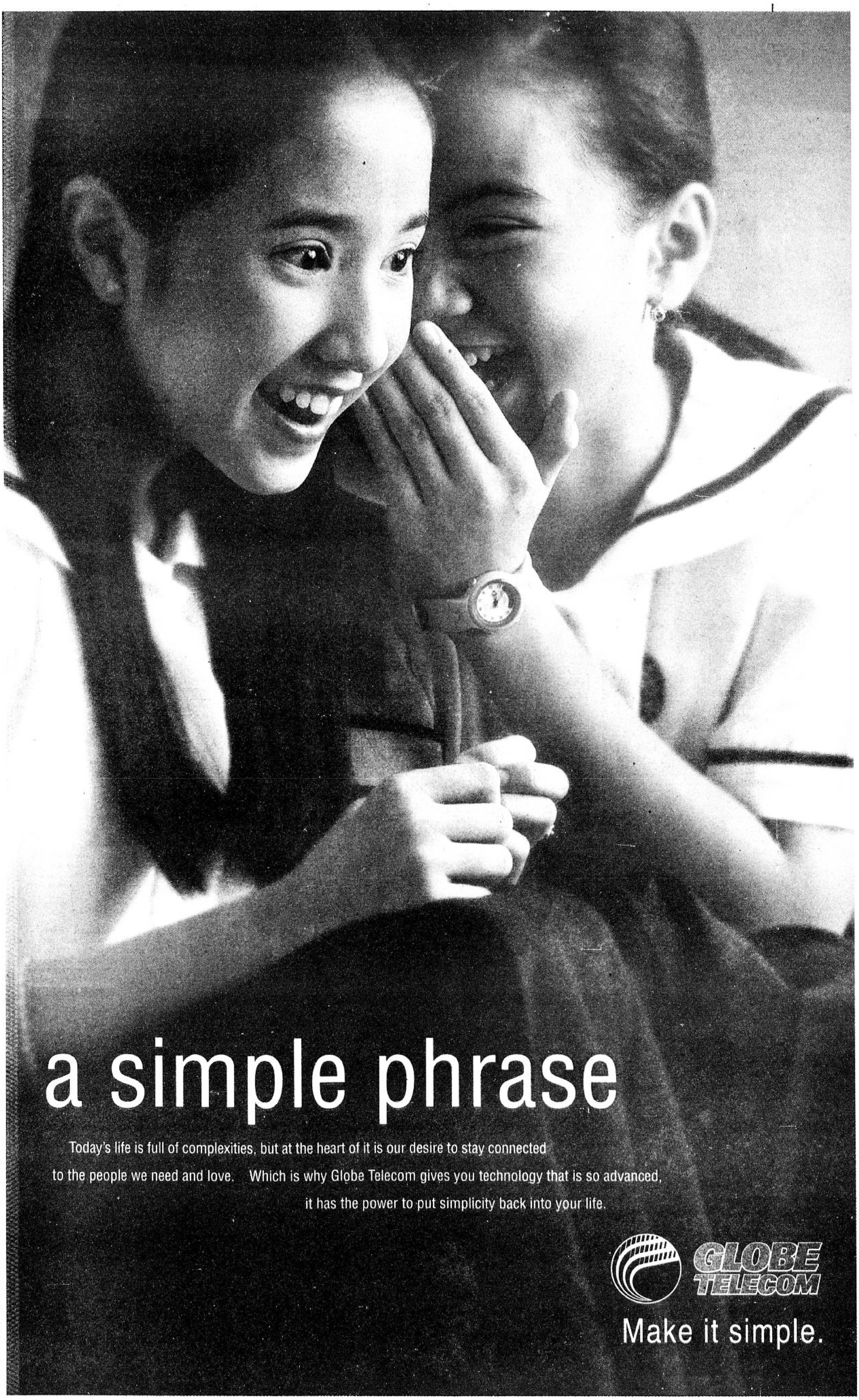
"I am for research projects that benefit society, particularly the marginalized people, not only to enhance the vision of scientists aiming to improve human lives but also to encourage other people to participate in national development. A nation will not be truly developed unless science and technology advances."

Mellanie T. Gomez
BS Biology

"Let us return to our age-old values of self-reliance and self-determination by advancing science and technology for our national development. The way is wide open for us. I want to link science and technology to entrepreneurial activities that the poor can do."

Noel Peter B. Tan
BS Chemical Engineering

"The BPI Science Awards motivates people to keep on dreaming and to struggle for more breakthroughs in science and technology to make this world a better place to live in. The best thing I can do to contribute to national development is to engage myself in research."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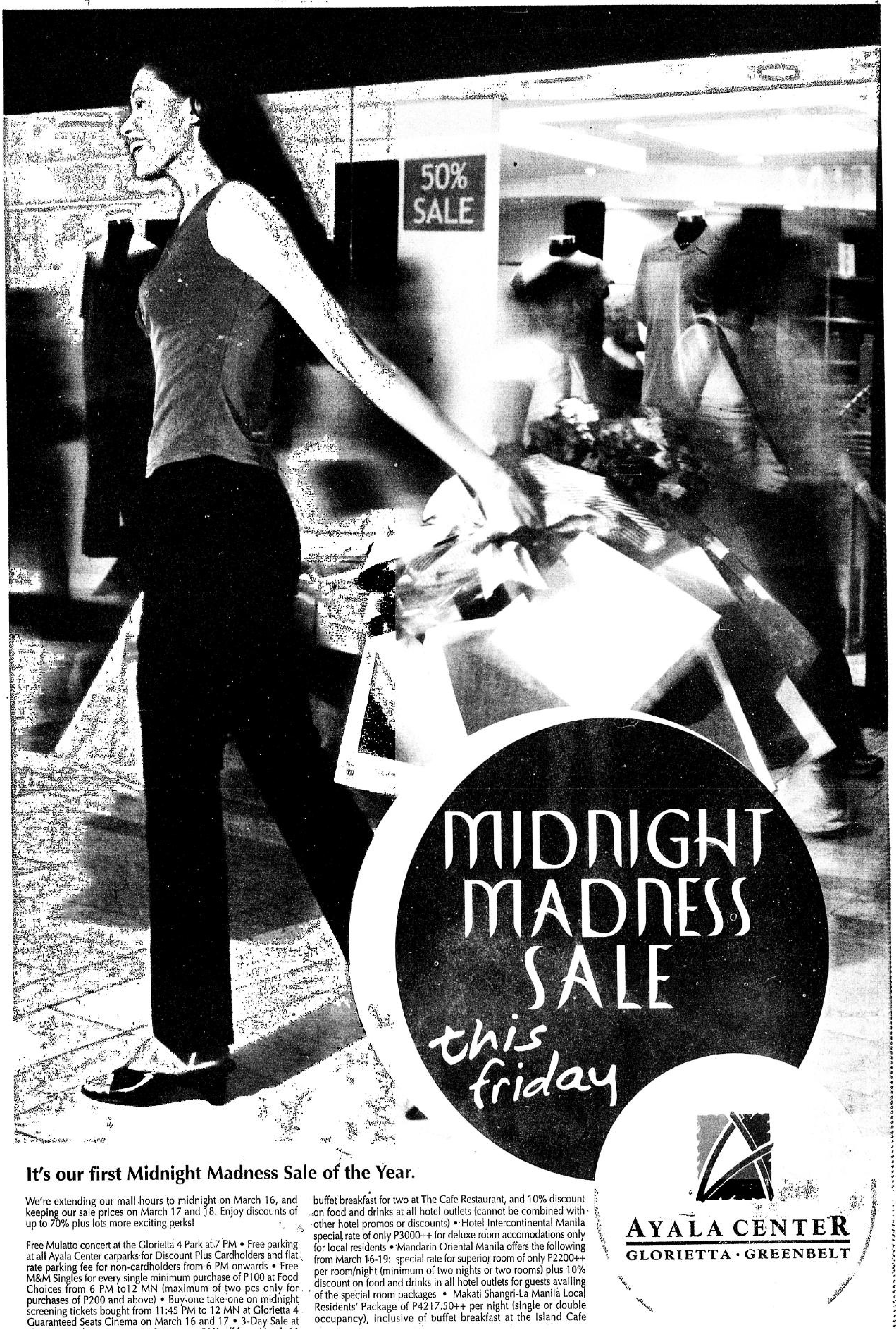

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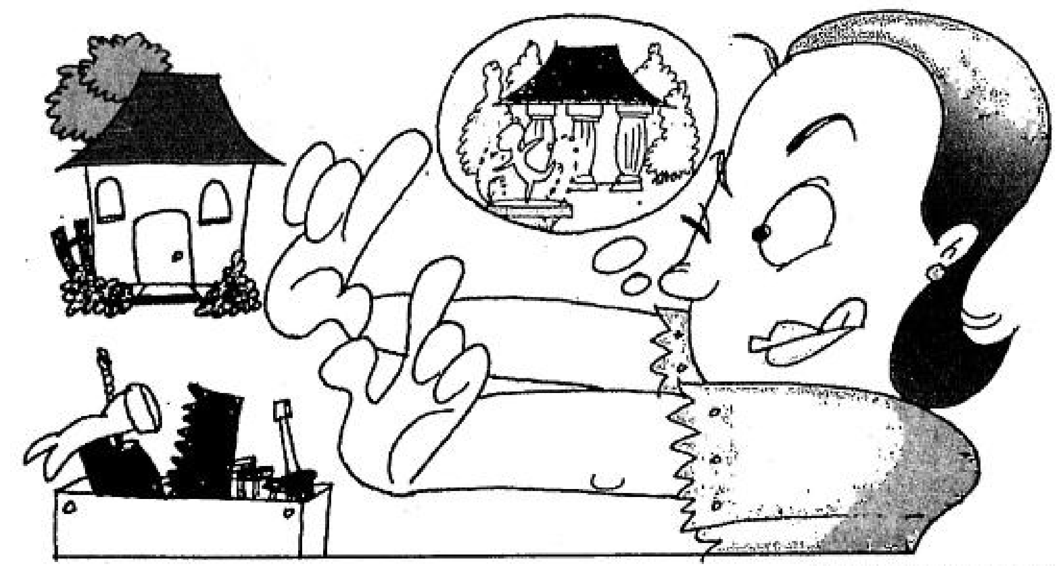
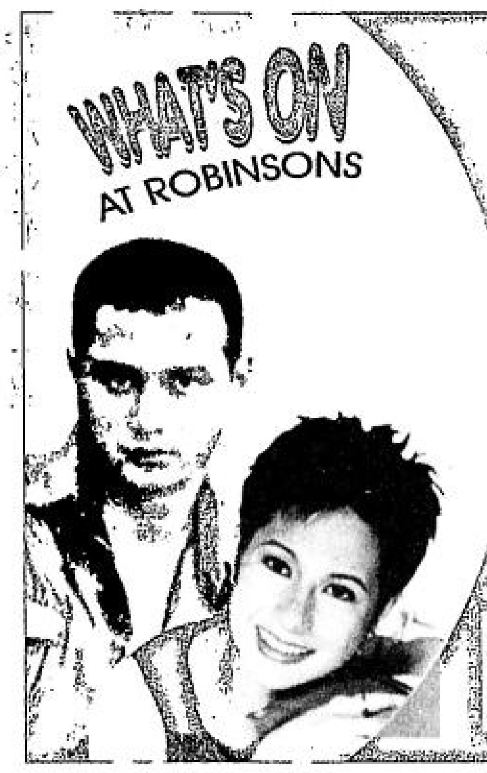


ILLUSTRATIONS STEPH BRAVO

Lust in space

An etiquette-challenged look at what Filipinos do to their abodes



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By Jose Javier Reyes

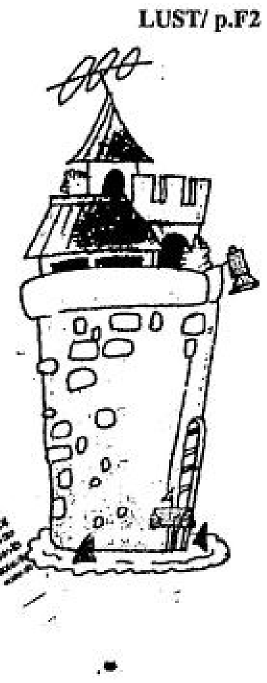
OVER CUPS of coffee, I told one of my best friends about an article I wanted to write regarding the Filipino and his home. Filmmaker Don Escudero must certainly have a valid opinion about the way our dear *kababayans* treat their *bahay* to turn them into their true *tahanan*. I said I wanted to write something acidic, acerbic… I wanted to display wit and even bitchiness. He agreed that there was no way to tackle the taste of the Pinoy in building houses and cramming the interiors without violating laws of etiquette—or stepping on a toe or two of some of our friends.

The conversation stretched to more than what a single printable article can carry. We laughed. We desperately tried not to cite specific examples out of sheer fear that we might get fruitcakes for Christmas, much less experience the tenderness of *beso-beso* if and when we bumped into the friends we were particularly citing. Ah, well: it is going to be my byline, right? But there has to be an attempt to be somewhat objective, scientific, even clinical in trying to decipher why the urban Pinoy treats his home the way he does.

Edifice complex

My friend hit the nail on the proverbial head: in our country, your home is your ultimate and absolute evidence of your station. It says everything about who you are, how far you have gone and what you have to show. Your address is still your trump card. As if that were not enough, what you present as your home is a valuable index of not only your level when you file your tax return but also the sensitivity of your taste buds under the over

LUST/ p.F2



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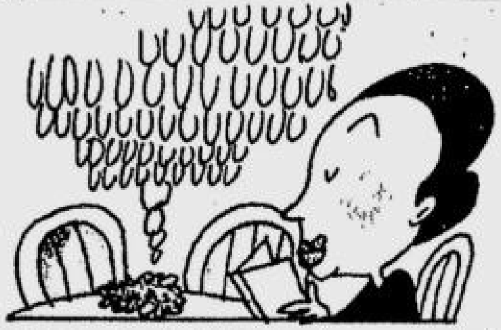

Lust in space

(From page F1)

used and overbearing term called sophistication.

This is probably why Filipinos have this genetic obsession called edifice complex. Those who can afford will certainly erect homes that attempt to challenge the majesty of the Parthenon or the opulence of the Versailles. It's not only the lot area, Honey, it's the total square meters of living space. Subtlety is difficult when you are out to prove that you spent this much because you have that much while exhibiting much too much.

But there is no single law in our much-ballyhooed Constitution that says you are forbidden to construct a house that resembles Scarlett O'Hara's Tara even if it looks like an unidentified flying object, a monstrosity transplanted from the American Civil War to a suburban village North of the Pasig River. There is an executive order that forbids the attempt to reproduce an Italian villa two blocks away from the latest franchise kiosk of Zagu.

We all love a big thing. It makes such a big deal to open 15-ft tall steel gates to welcome any guest to a sudden apparition of architectural bewilderment. It is such an affirmation of character to create such drama in being the masters of brand-new ancestral homes. The choice of style is dependent on the fantasies of owners or even the dismay of their architects. The whole principle of *bongga* existed even before the archetypal beautician finally coined the word in the '80s.

The only sad part is that public display of wealth and neo-patrician taste carries certain setbacks. If you have to flaunt what you got, you have to be prepared not to generate unnecessary curiosity with what you own. Despite all attempts to provide historic landmarks in your exclusive village, walls must surround the perimeter of your property for security.

Well, yes, you spent millions to dwarf your next-door neighbor's little castle. But you also made sure that no one within street view sees too much of that Disneyland castle you constructed. There must be divine irony in that. Certainly it is not guilt brought about by political conscience. Neither is it an inner agony of analyzing demographics about the disparity between the haves and have-nots. It is more of fear, really—that the have-nots will take interest in what you have. So aside from the 24-hour security guard, there are the walls to insulate the residents from the prying eyes of the Akyat-Bahay Gang.

'Borloloy'

There is the aesthetics of the *borloloy*. The term is used to refer to any architectural fragment or decorative design meant to add grandeur or richness to anything that looks staid. Aside from predictable balconies, unexpected towers and other convolutions in the geometry of roofing design, there are also the precast adornments (ranging from gargoyles to Baroque or Rococo distortions), stained glass windows, mammoth concrete lions, occasional Sphinxes, and sometimes even the Little Mermaid.

Such inclusions are made to approximate Grandeur! The exclamation point is important, as well as the capital letter. It is not enough to be regal, but it is important to be Grand!

There are also the latest trends in the use of building materials in houses. One look at the predominant material in a house can practically date the construction as reliable as a Carbon 14 Test. Synthetic rubble was once so chic. Then came the use of Mactan stone, usurped to the point that you'd think the island of Cebu would sink back into the ocean because all its base rock bed had been quarried to beautify Manila mansions.

Don and I also zeroed in on the question of proportion. It's all in the size, dear. Blessed are those who can afford chunks of land that can accommodate houses that require a certain breathing space in order for one to fully appreciate its sheer existence. But then trying to create a colonial monstrosity on 250 sq m of land can pose certain problems, most especially when you are obliged to surrender 2 meters of frontage according to local building laws.

It is not all that surprising that some Filipino houses look like they are alphabet blocks that dropped very tightly on some assigned space in the planet. The problem can be best summarized as Cinderella's stepsister desperately trying to shove her feet on that controversial glass slipper. Oversized houses on undersized land areas carry the grace of terminal constipation.

Fear of empty space

We still have to figure out why Filipinos have a fear of empty spaces. *Horror vacui*. As much as exteriors look too big, imagine the passion, nay, the neurosis of trying to fill up every available free space inside under the guise of, uh, interior design. Worse yet, others even claim this to be the statement.

Absorbed as a possible cultural trait from a mere bad habit, the aesthetics of stuffing everything and anything to create an immediate visual assault may also be an indication of wealth. Obsessive accumulation, it is called. It is not enough to accumulate but you must also display. I have nothing against dark wood furniture or main doors carved like The Gates of Hell, grand stairways that carry dramatic twist for even grander entrances, moldings that turn living and dining rooms into 18-tiered wedding cakes or even imitation French furniture in gold (painted and not even gilded).

All this richness, all this visual masturbation may serve the purpose of stunning first-time guests. In venues such as these, one is compelled to be very, very careful in the use of every human muscle. You fear toppling over the Nubian Slave that is looming over your head while sipping the imported instant coffee served to you in expensive bone china. You survey the assortment of Baccarat bric-a-bracs, porcelain vases and antique ivory figurines that go so well with the most intricately carved Betis furniture. You also wonder whether that interesting ceramic concoction is an ashtray, or the urn that holds the ashes of the beloved grandmother whose death was a highlight in this family's history.

You look with fear at a life-size oil portrait of the Mistress of the House peering at the domain of her fiefdom. She is immortalized in that predictably stiff pose, looking embalmed rather than regal, like a dominatrix invited to a formal function at the Heroes Hall, sporting a hairdo that is a cross between Darth Vader's helmet and a Conehead. You can practically smell her Escape perfume, sprayed on her person the way her gardener deals with Malathion.

You also wonder what sort of creature comforts those who dwell in this house enjoy. You estimate the terror that reigns in the hearts of their platoon of uniformed *muchachas* as they clear away all the dust from these earthly possessions. Then you wonder what law of the universe forced you to remove your footwear even though this place is anything but Japanese, as you slide your feet on the immaculate furry white carpet.

In an age where space is the ultimate luxury, the children of these islands fear that any semblance of emptiness is a cause for insecurity. There are some like me who are congenital *mambubuloks*, afraid to throw away anything since they might be of use sometime within this lifetime. There are also others, who have a compulsion to stuff, cram, shove and squeeze as to provide enough weight in the surroundings and avoid the total collapse of the building foundations in the event of an earthquake.

Eclectic

The even saddest part is that a great number of us have to live with less space in our homes. Yet our neurosis prevails. Even if the living area has the floor area of a shoebox and ceiling height just about half an inch above the top of our heads, we still insist on chandeliers, not only tastefully oversized but also rather incomprehensibly overwhelming furniture. We still insist on all the condiments to remove any opportunity for a square inch of empty space.

Our forefathers had it better. A look at old photographs of 19th-century Filipino homes showed a respect for human bodies to move freely within their homes. Sure, we had those carved curlicues and other forms of fancy woodwork, but our ancestors were not afraid to show floors, leave empty walls and reserve color or texture whenever they were unnecessary. There was the beauty of cross-ventilation, the privilege of natural lighting, and not synthetic conveniences such as air-conditioning and halogen lights.

It's all about proportion, Don said. It's also about propriety. But then when houses are treated as badges of social mobility, proportion and propriety cease to be operational.

The term "eclectic" has been abused and misused. We still subscribe to the school of Rococo Jeepney Art. We follow the logic in our favorite summer dessert, *halo-halo*: just plunk all the sweets together, top it with shaved ice, add a scoop of ice cream and a generous douse of *leche evaporada* then slush them all together—and you have something palatable.

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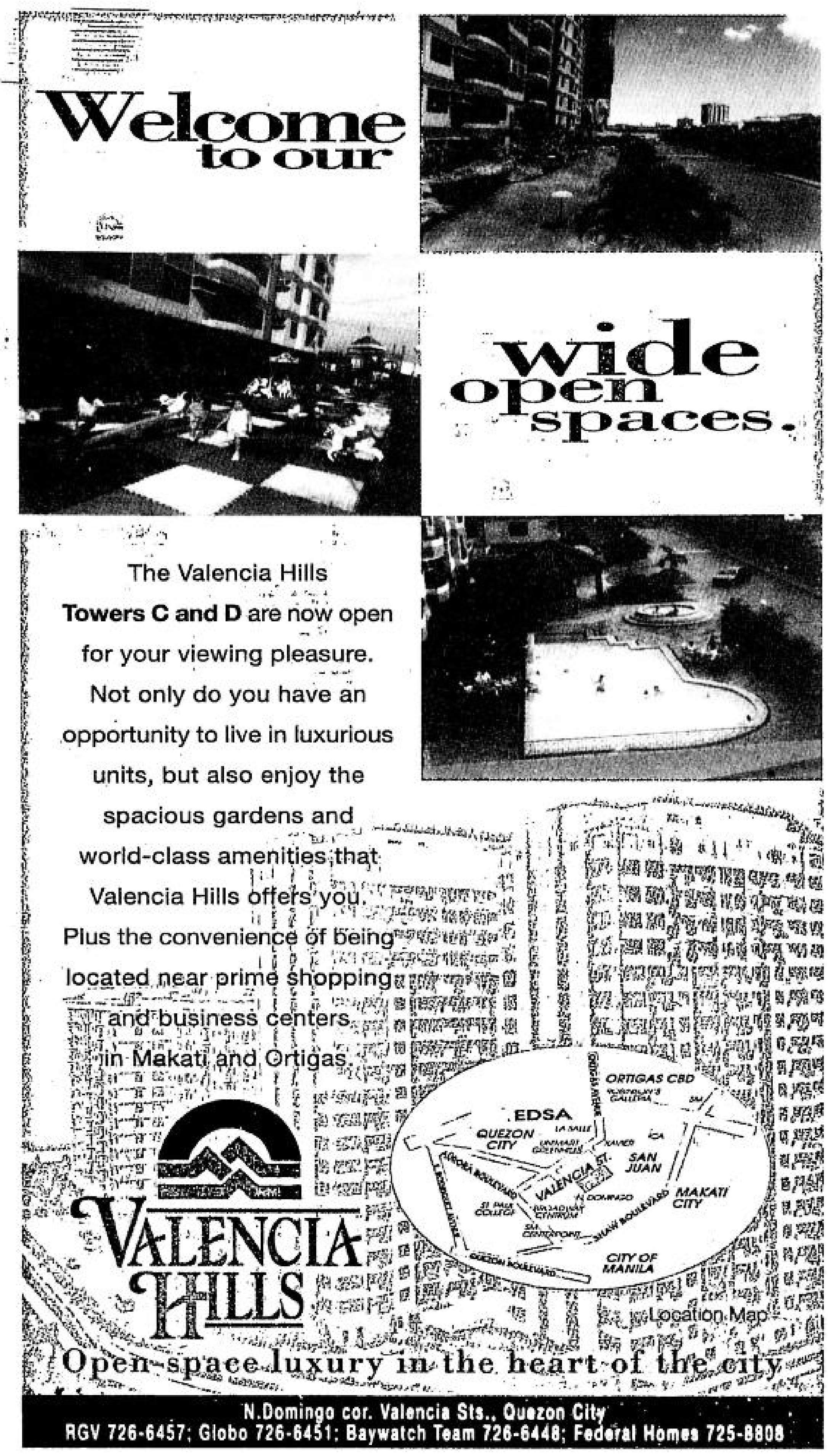

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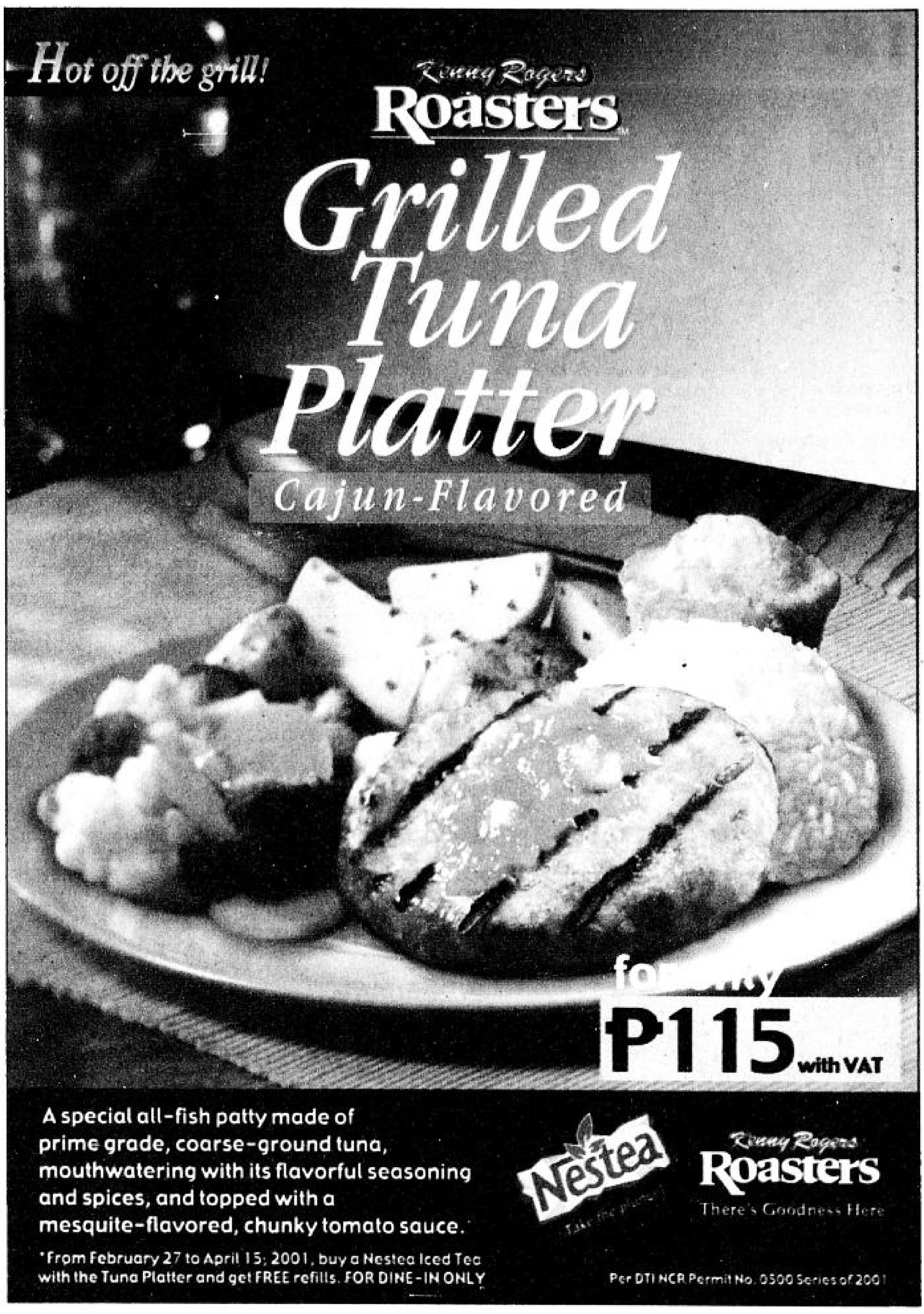

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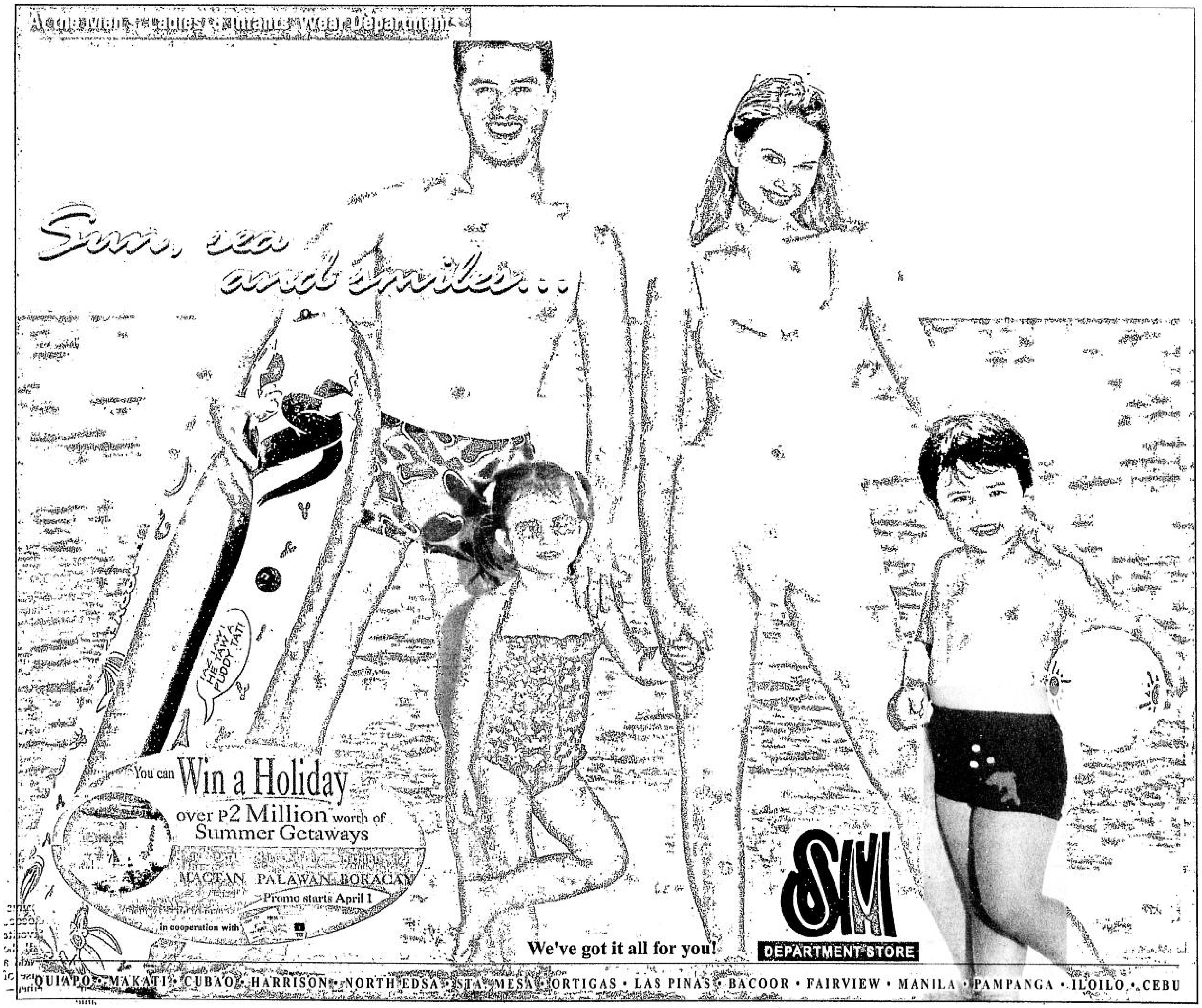

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BIRTHDAY lady Fe Rodriguez (left) with Ching Cruz and Nene Leonor

WITH LULU Castañeda, Tessie Luz, Myrna Borromeo, Letty Bonoan, Thelma Gana and Kathy Park

WITH MARITESS Pineda, Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste, Sonny Ong and Susing Pineda

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A country affair to remember

By Donnie C. Ramirez

FE Rodriguez, the enterprising lady behind the success of Burger Machine, invited her friends for an out-of-town celebration of her recent birthday. The "country affair" was held at her newly completed summer house in Lian, Batangas. Perched on a promontory called Ginger Hill in Barrio Luyahan, the imposing structure gives a breath-taking view of the fabled Batangas beaches.

The celebrator, who is known for her fashion savvy as much as for her keen business sense, welcomed the out-of-towners in a sleek linen and silk hostess gown with slitted skirt designed by Pepito Albert. Also in colorful tropical outfits were her husband Ces and their children Junie, Randy, Stacy and Mary Faye with husband Jarie Garcia and little daughter Sasha.

Early-comers enjoyed a native *merienda* of *bibingka, dinuguan at puto* and other *kakanin* served under a Muslim-draped bamboo trellis on the lower lawns. Then the guests walked up *gasera*-lined adobe steps leading to the lagoon-like pool area where Robert Blancaflor of 1816 Flowers set up a huge white tent for the dinner buffet. Robert created exquisite centerpieces of giant wild anthuriums and papyruses and lit them with paper lanterns that blended beautifully with the lush tropical landscaping of Rico Sison.

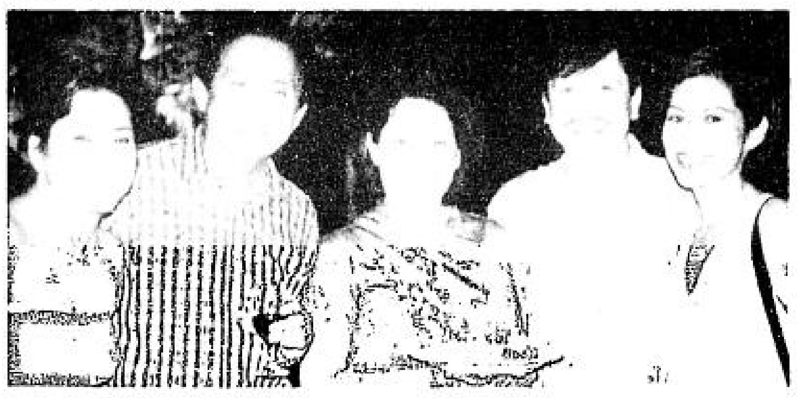
For added romance, music wafted in the air, courtesy of Fe's nephew, The Dawn band member and Club Seven Eight Orange co-owner JB Leonor. The festive fare was catered by Maritel Nievera's Cabalen Restaurant, with hot and spicy add-ons from Thai Chef Tum.

The dress code encouraged swimwear, but none over 12 dared to don a bathing suit. Instead, the ladies opted for sexy sarongs, bright floral tops and comfy pants.

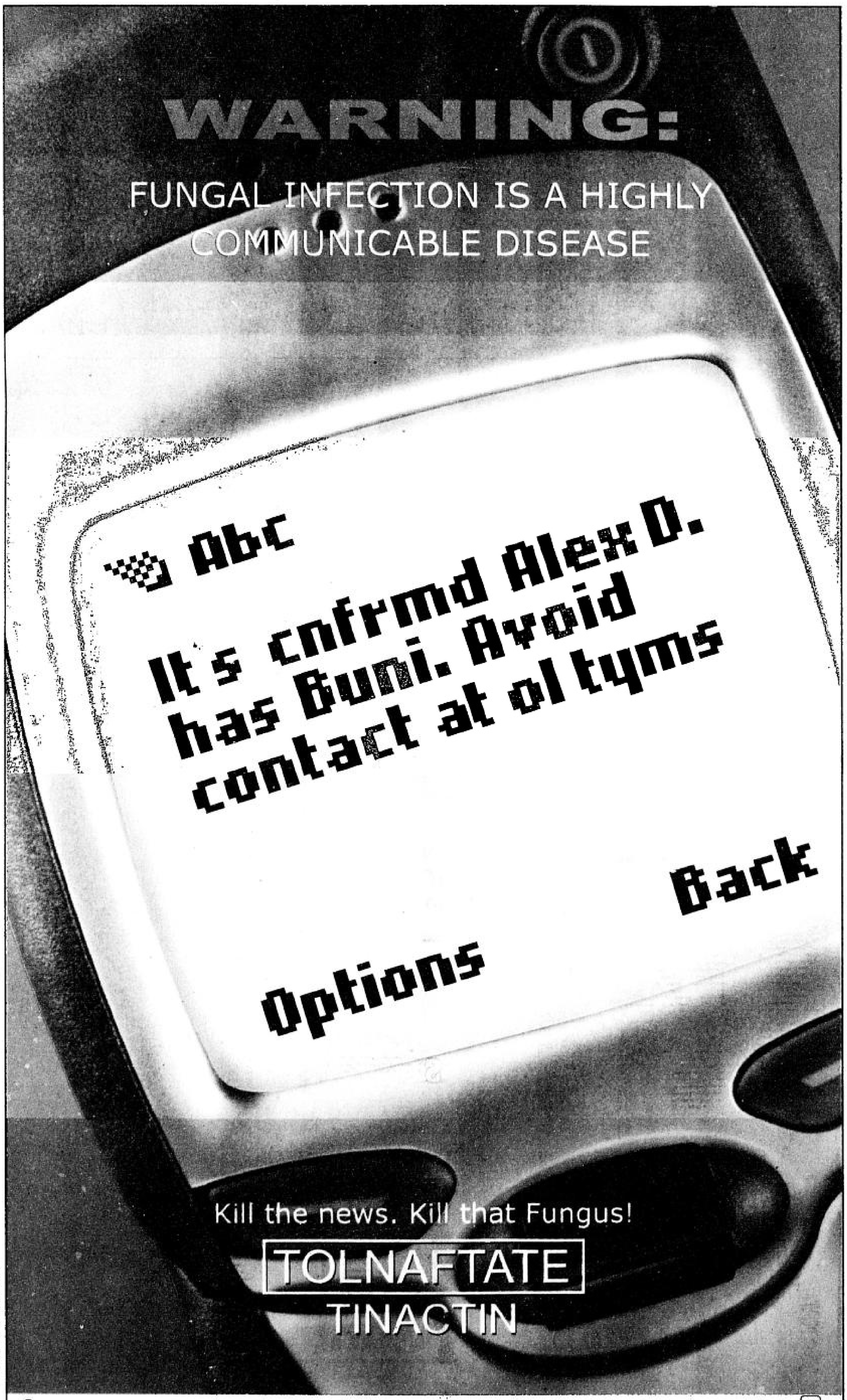
In full force were the big Santos and Rodriguez clans, the Ramoses of Balayan, Escaños, Bonoans, Leonors and Villasors. Others noted were Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste, space planner Robert Borja and best pal Ramon Zaragoza, Old Asia's Pachot and Toto Mapa, Makati Mayor Elenita Binay, Casa Marcos doyenne Nena del Rosario, businessman Raymond Moreno, Kaya Restaurant's Kathy Park, fashion icon Tina Maristela-Ocampo, porcelain beauty Ching Cruz, devoted twosome Doris Ho and Conrad Onglao, Vice President Tito Guingona's efficient Girl Friday Agnes Huibonhoa, Nayong Pilipino's workaholic executive director Myrna Borromeo, bubbly ballroom aficionada Margaret Kwok, Cinderella's Therese Coronel-Santos, couples Abe and Nini Licaros and Vic and Helen Ong and junior lovebirds Jay Server and Joey Mead.

Fe requested her guests to bring her no gifts and instead give donations to her and her husband Ces' personal project to build a chapel in Barrio Luyahan in honor of the Immaculate Conception.

STACY Rodriguez, Rico Sison, Mailet Bonoan, Mari Escano and Jarie and Mary Faye Garcia



IVY Almario, Tony Leviste, Doris Ho, Ding Mercado and Roi Philips



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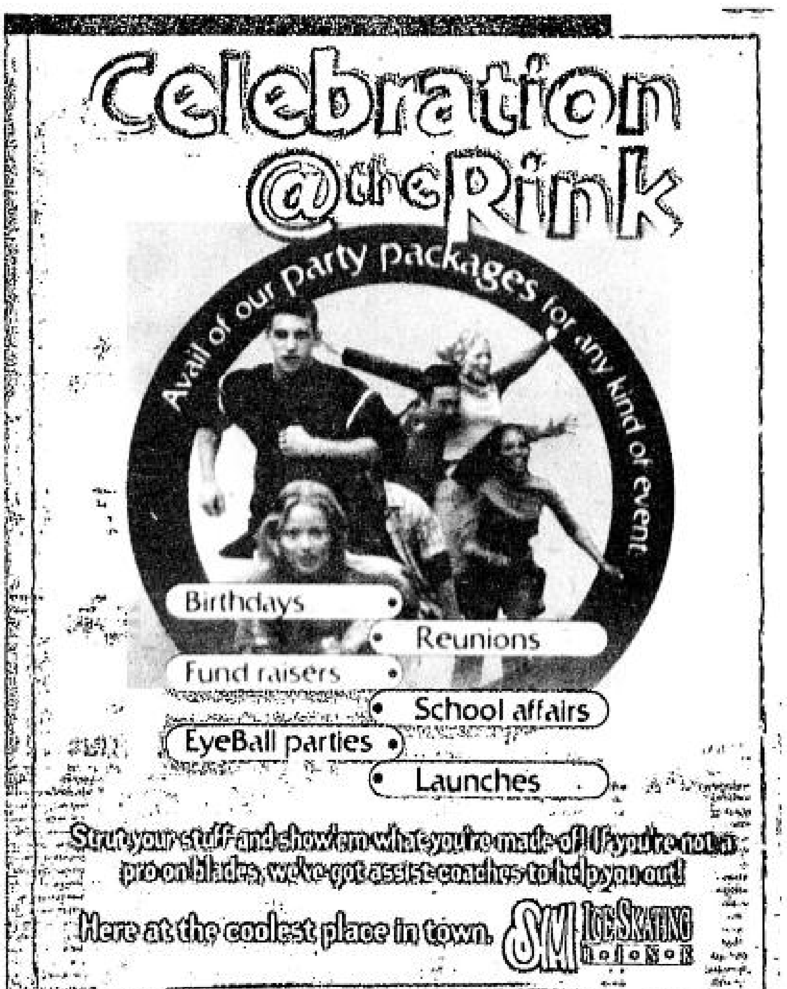

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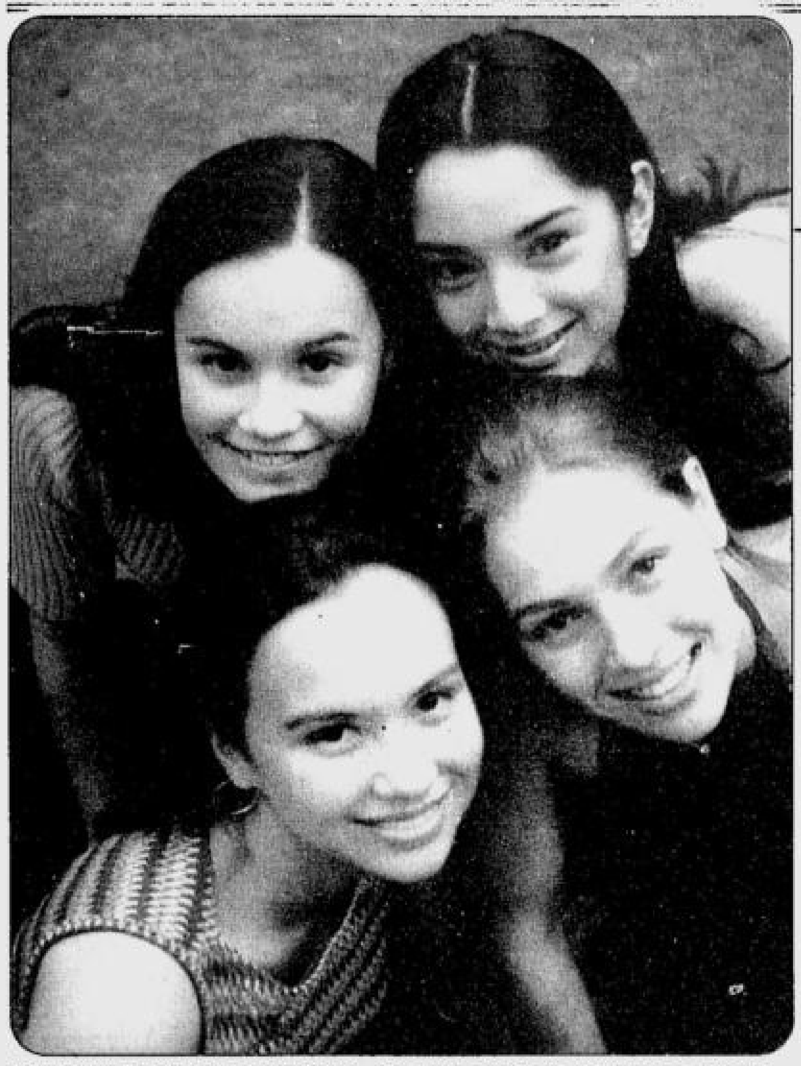
LIFESTYLE Trend Spotting

Sister equestrienne act

These girls gain hope and strength from bonding with one another and their horses



BEAUTY, BRAINS, BREEDING. (Clockwise) Paola Cojuangco, Marga Villanueva, Paola Zobel and Danielle Cojuangco

By Marge C. Enriquez
Photos by Raymond Lauchengco

BY VIRTUE of their pedigree and looks, teeners Paola Zobel, Danielle and Paola Cojuangco and Marga Villanueva could well be the next generation's Who's Who or Manila's Prettiest, Most Desirable Bachelorettes or, as society institution Maurice Arcache calls them, "royalettes." But that's too trivial for them.

These equestriennes are tomorrow's newsmakers in the sports page rather than just scions photographed in the society columns.

Paola Z, 17, and Danielle, 16, are aspiring for the show jumping competition in the Southeast Asian Games. They're already in the same league as Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski who's much older and more experienced. They feel they've invested their time training in Australia and in joining competitions.

Marga and the younger Paola are also aiming high.

You could say that show jumping is the sport of the elite. Since the girls come from affluent families, the parents can afford to buy them horses and send them for training and competitions overseas. But there are things that money can't buy—discipline, purity and friendship. These are virtues that they have acquired for themselves.

To spend a Saturday afternoon with the young is certainly a privilege for a jaded adult like this writer. There is so much to pick up from them such as the speed with which they learn, their intuitive perspicacity, love for animals, refinement and their eagerness for discovery.

Theirs is also a story of innocent friendship and commitment to sharing a line of supportive communication, and keeping that line open. They value the communion of spirit among themselves and with their horses in a purer and uncomplicated sense.

All in the family

Camila Paola Zobel, the eldest of the batch, comes from a family of accomplished polo players. Her grandfather, businessman and columnist Enrique Zobel, used to play with royalty. Her father Iñigo is one of the best in the country. Younger brother Jake has also taken up the sport.

Paola got her looks from her mother, former model Maricris Cardenas. She stands out in the crowd for her auburn hair, curves and vivacity. No wonder magazines offered pictorials, which she had turned down.

"I'd rather ride than see my pictures in the magazines," she declares. "It makes you strong and confident, you have to be decisive on what you want and how you want to take things. It teaches you a lot. Not everyone rides. It's very disciplined. You have to be committed. If we don't ride every day or ride a certain number of hours a week, there's no way we would come as far as today."

Last November in her first international competition, Paola represented the Philippines in the Nations Cup in Korea. The youngest and the only female rider, she placed seventh despite the fact that the horse wasn't hers.

"I had no idea what the horse was gonna do," she recalls. Unfortunately, the horse got colic so it couldn't compete in the second round. Had she competed in the second round, she estimated that she could be in the Top 3.

"Everyone said, 'Oh the horse is so bad. You're so young, you're never going to be able do it.' But I did and everyone was shocked. Everyone came up to me and asked, 'How did you do it?'"

She owns two horses—a Dutch warmblood, a half-Dutch warmblood, and a half-New Zealand thoroughbred—that are twice the size of her father's polo ponies.

Friends describe Paola as responsible. She shows concern for both people and horses. "When you ride and there's something wrong she'll always be the first to tell you," observes Paola Cojuangco.

Marga adds, "She looks out for all of us. If one of our horses is sick, she'll talk to the vets, she'll always give suggestions."

Danielle says, "She's on top of everything. She's a consistent rider, which I try to be. She has good style and works well under pressure."

When she graduates from the International School this June, Paola plans to take a year off from her studies so she can gird for more international competitions such as the SEA Games and the Sunshine Tour in Spain in 2002.

Topnotcher

Paola Z's best friend, Danielle, is the daughter of businessman Mark and Kimi Cojuangco. Danielle and her younger sister Paola got their exposure to horses in their grandfather's farm in Australia. Their *lolo*, Eduardo Cojuangco, specializes in dressage. Their grandmother Gretchen also rides.

Being older, Danielle is more serious than her sister, who's in Class B. Just how serious?

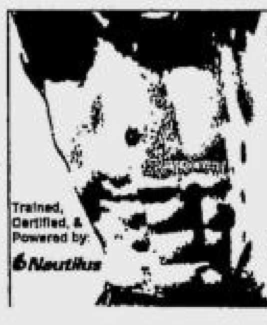
"Paola, Mikee and I are jumping in the same level—1.30 meters," Danielle says. "Our horses are capable. You need a team for the SEA Games. The three of us are willing to go. We need one more to complete it."

The Philippine Equestrienne Federation sent Danielle to represent the Philippines in the international competition for young riders in show jumping in Chennai, India where she merited top honors in the individual category. Although she maneuvers a brakeless half-ton thoroughbred in high fences with flair, dedication and assiduous competence, the perfectionist Danielle feels she still has room for improvement.

Her biggest challenge is to be consistent. "I tend to have good days. Then I'll go a few weeks having a hard time, or my horse wouldn't be doing too well," she says.

Measuring athletic strength can be tough in a sport where some 90

SISTER/ p.G2



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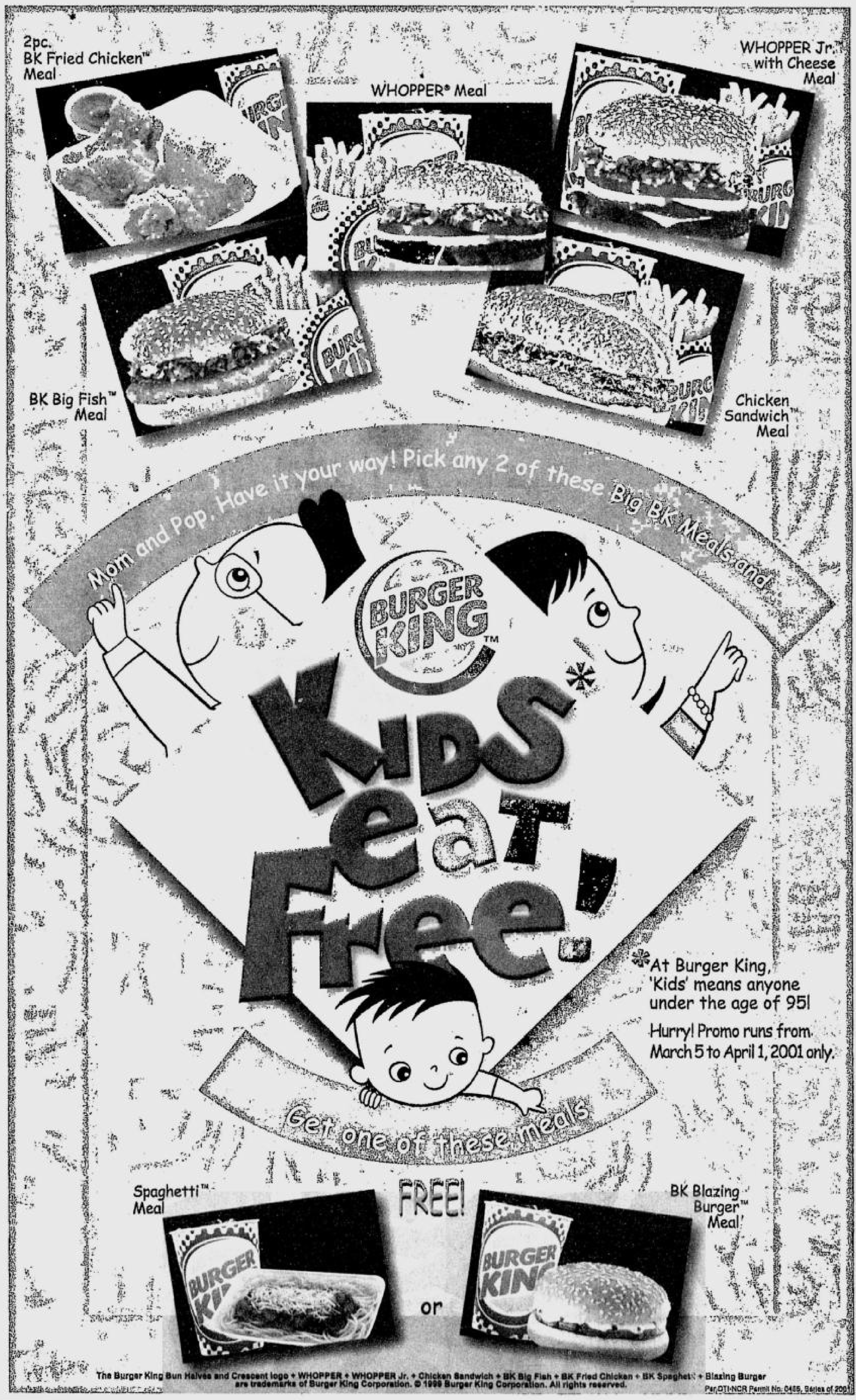

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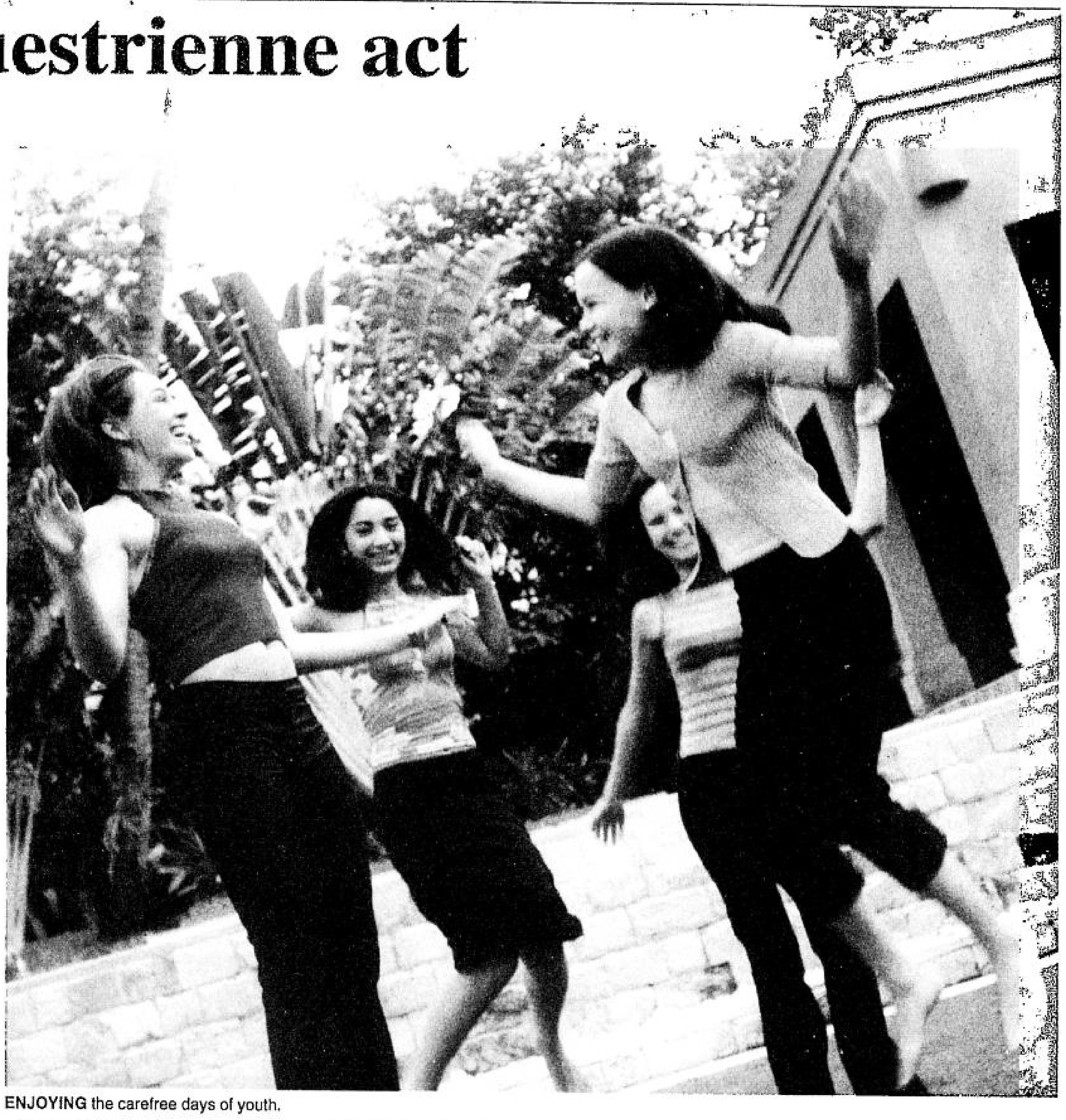
Sister equestrienne act

(From page G1)

percent of the winning comes from the horse. Danielle underscores the importance of elective kinship between the rider and the horse. Once there's rapport with the horse, then the rider can be more courageous.

Motivated

Marga's father, Luis Villanueva, introduced her to horses. She started riding lessons at the Manila Polo Club, but she was hungry for more knowledge. "I wanted to be where I was happiest and where I wasn't bored. I wanted to be with a teacher who could teach me new things every day and who would motivate me," she says.



ENJOYING the carefree days of youth.

MARGA VILLANUEVA. Determined

She met serious equestriennes at the Alabang Riding School and was trained under Denise Yabut-Cojuangco.

"She is so driven and it's great. It's amazing how far she got in riding," says Marga of her mentor who has competed in the Olympics.

"I'm still young. I haven't decided yet like whether I'm that committed."

Marga placed first in the children's competition of the Federacion Eqestrienne Internationale.

"I also competed in Switzerland. That was good for me. The best place was ninth. But that's out of 200 riders. That's more than how many riders in the Philippines," she says.

"We need dressage," Marga adds. "It's part of our training. I like to concentrate on show jumping. I love the speed and height of jumping."

When she's not on her Dutch warmblood named Galusa, Marga plays a mean volleyball.

A colleague points out that Marga's virtues are diligence and her determination to succeed. As a friend they commend her understanding nature.

"Even if she's quiet, she knows what you're saying," says Paola Cojuangco.

Youngest

Paola Cojuangco, 15, the most soft-spoken, is the perfect example of the adage "Still waters run deep."

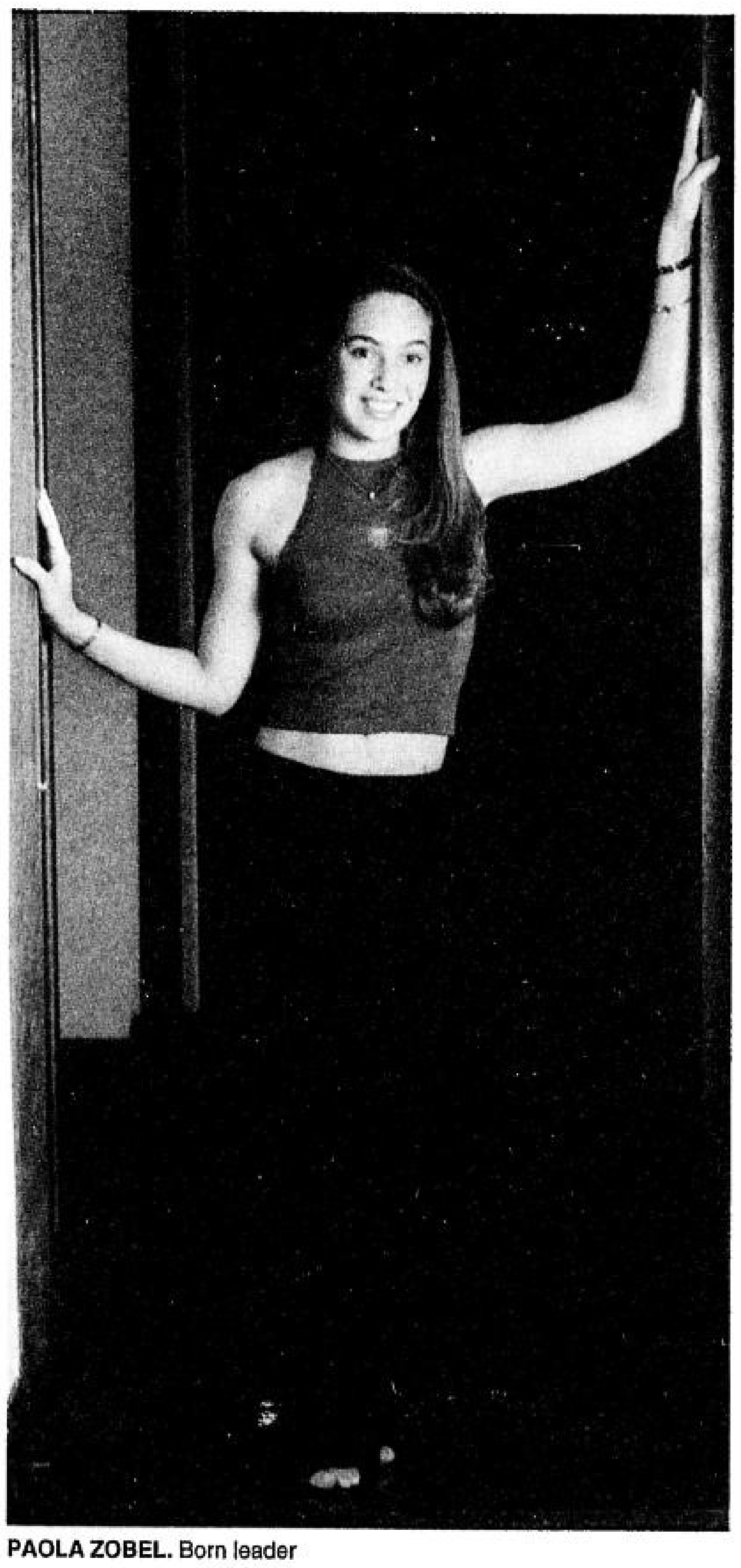
"She's quiet but there's always the understanding," remarks Paola Z.

Although she may not be as assertive as her older sister, Paola C. is already showing true grit. Her peers commend Paola for her natural ability in show jumping.

"She has chemistry with her horses that she can ride a lot of them," says Danielle.

"She's a catch rider. You can give her any horse and she'll do her best. She'll try to let the horse go its own way or get on a dead horse and beat it up. She'll make it work."

DANIELLE COJUANGCO. Assertive equestrienne



PAOLA ZOBEL. Born leader

As a sibling, she describes her younger sister as very helpful.

"We have quarrels, but she never takes anything against you. She never holds a grudge, always sweet as ever."

Paola says, "My sister helps me a lot. When I watch from her, I learn like proper form, precision and what to do."

The young Paola's most ecstatic moments are riding and establishing a bond with her Australian stock horse. "When you get to do stuff on horses, it feels like an accomplishment," she says.

Asked what's her biggest accomplishment, Paola replies, "Last month, I was able to do a B class which was a higher level. One of my goals is to join the A class. To be able to jump that height you need a good horse, you have to be trained properly. My horse is okay for now. But it can't jump as high."

Best friends

Paola Z and Danielle's friendship goes beyond company, exchange of ideas and shared activities. They wouldn't mind being stranded on an island and still have a good laugh.

"We have this joke that we can read each other's minds already. She finishes my sentences. We dress the same way. There are days we ride in exactly the same thing. We try so hard not to do that," says Danielle.

In a society filled with hypocrisy, they've shown courage in being honest with each other. The girls look up to Danielle for her frank views and honesty.

Even if they're in a competitive sport, the girls don't compete with each other.

Says Paola Z: "It's not like, 'Oh I'm not going to win for myself.' It's more like, 'I want to do my best but I want Danielle to do her best. Like if she wins, I'm happy. When I go there and I make a mistake, she's comes in and says, 'You have to!' She's thankful of the pressure we put into. Even if it's a competitive sport we don't compete with each other. If she wins, it's like I've won."

"Riding is a unique sport," Marga says. "It takes one to know the sport to understand what you're thinking and what you feel. I think everyone has that intuition."

Danielle joins in, "We work together to get there---every day."

After leaving the interview, this writer realizes that it's not just their discipline and single-mindedness that have taken them so far. Being young, they do their sport with a sense of joy. They haven't succumbed yet the addiction of being driven to succeed, a trait developed in adulthood. We could learn from these youths that creative leaps of the spirit are made in a state more similar to play.

PAOLA COJUANGCO. A natural

The stars show a new Filipino after Edsa II

The constellation has consistently shown that the magnificent revolution has been preordained. Truly, the Philippines is getting its act together and coming into its own

By Resti H. Santiago

PEOPLE Power has again made history. A new Philippines is being fashioned from the excitement of the revolution. What comes next? After our victory, will we return to our old self?

What is not very obvious is the change that is happening within us. It may seem that we have gone back to the usual ways, but as the constellation shows, the seed of a new Filipino was planted on the last quarter of 2000. In the horoscope of the Philippines, a Progressed New Moon, which is a symbol of beginning, took place around that time. During this period, the progressed Sun and Moon were on the same position and this symbolized the fertilization of our minds, which will give birth to a new breed of Filipinos that is more fit to face the challenges of the 21st century.

The kids gave up cartoons, the teens gave up MTVs, the mothers gave up soap operas, the men gave up billiards and golf in order to monitor the impeachment process. The two months of trial showed sustained focus—this was an indication of discipline.

The success of People Power II was prefigured in the influence of Jupiter on Gemini, which turned stationary, a very powerful position, on the last days of January. Jupiter is the planet of abundance and Gemini is the sign of information. People Power II proved the importance of information, that is, telecommunications and technology, in our lives. Filipinos successfully employed modern technology in carrying out political change. The media kept the nation together. Websites also sprouted to bring the political battle into cyberspace. The country's unofficial title as "the text capital of the world" took on a new meaning.

Now that the battle has been won, a door in the Filipino psyche has been opened. Filipinos' use of technology [illegible] a good indicator that they can now [illegible] their place on the world stage. They can now work toward the fulfillment of their destiny because Uranus, the planet of technology, is in the most elevated side of the country's horoscope. The Filipinos will play a big role in world events of the 21st century through computers and technology.

At the height of the revolution, transiting Uranus was in exact trine with the country's North Node (pointer of path) in Gemini, the sign of communication. The people who contributed to the revolution will form a new breed of Filipinos who are tech-savvy, freedom-loving, socially aware and patriotic; they will dance or text their way towards a revolution. The "revolutionaries" and their children will not hesitate to set aside their personal interests should there be another call for people power.

We Filipinos are setting a trend that will become the wave of the future. Our brand of revolution will become the most accepted method of affecting change in the future.

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FOR THE RECORD PHOTO: ERNIE SARMIENTO

Baby boomers are waxing nostalgic. Just when the waxed disc was going the way of the dinosaur, Europeans are reviving it in bars and parties. Records are hot and, more so, those plastic record players. Kids in the '60s and '70s will recall the days when their maids would save up their wages just so they could buy a portable record player and listen to Nora Aunor and Victor Wood. Burro, a London fashion house, produced a 33 1/3 album as part of a promo for its fashion show.

Mike Arroyo visits Helping Foundation

ARROYO gets a ceremonial haircut from Reyes at the Vitas training center. This symbolizes the start of something bigger for the foundation.

LIKE a good spouse, First Gentleman Mike Arroyo helps in worthy livelihood projects, especially if the project is the Helping Foundation Inc., led by a predecessor he respects, former First Lady Amelita "Ming" Ramos. With 41,204 graduates, the foundation continues to benefit thousands of underprivileged who are being given the chance to acquire useful livelihood skills.

Helping Foundation was established in 1994 by top hairdresser Ricky Reyes and was supported by Ms Ramos. The foundation seeks to address the unemployment problems in depressed communities by holding training programs. These centers offer free courses in crafts and livelihood (sewing, food trade, cosmetology, handicraft, waste recycling, hotel and restaurant service); industrial (building wiring, welding, masonry, plumbing, electronics, automotive mechanic, refrigeration and air-conditioning service, computer programming); technical (trade testing, training packages for LGU); and micro-enterprise program, cooperative, development, business planning, product design and marketing, financial and technical assistance).

As the Foundation's honorary chair he first visited the Vitas training center with Ms Ramos.

"He went around the different areas of the center and you could see that he was carefully taking mental notes of the programs and the problems in the area. He is really keen on getting his hands dirty and getting down to work," says Reyes, the foundation's executive director.

VISITING United States Rep. Bob Filner (center), was feted recently by the Veterans Federation of the Philippines (VFP). From left, Mark Suluen Jr., OIC of the Philippine Veterans Administration; retired Col. Emmanuel V. de Ocampo, VFP president, Filner; Ricardo A. Balbido Jr., president and CEO of the Philippine Veterans Bank, and Florencio Sioson, Veterans Federation Party treasurer general.

End-of-season sale at Duty Free Philippines

FASHION Walk, the new fashion haven at Duty Free Philippines, brings together the world's finest brands for its ongoing "End of Season Sale."

Fabulous items from fashion giants such as Nina Ricci, Celine, Givenchy, Paco Rabanne, Lancel, Dunhill, Burberry and Bally are available on discounts of up to 75 percent.

Chic new styles from Esprit, Benetton, Kipling, Elle and Guess turn up the heat for casual cool this summer.

A taste of Milan and Paris with hot new items from Sequioa, Dimoni, Rocobarocco, Rodo and Longchamp could light up your fashion sense with discounts ranging from 30-70 percent.

The craze for fashion trickles down to the toes with great discounts from Fashion Walk's extensive footwear selection that includes Bruno Magli, Florsheim, Nine West, Enzo Angiolini, Naturalizer and Candies.

The year is gleaming with optimism with eyewear finds from Escada, Kenzo, Dolce & Gabanna, Chloe and Replay giving shoppers discounts of up to 40 percent.

Timing is everything so take advantage of the big discounts from Guy Laroche and Charles Jourdan fashion watches.

Dress-up clothes with the latest fashion accessories from Kenzo and Lanvin offered at discounts of 20-75 percent.

Leather goods and travelling accessories from DKNY, Clifton and Delsey make traveling a breeze with 30-50 percent discounts.

Perfect gift ideas, ceramic figurines from Lladro are being offered at discounted prices.

Great savings, world-class store environment and personalized service make Fashion Walk the ultimate shopping destination. Fashion Walk's "End of Season Sale" will run until April 15.

Midnight madness sale to reel off at Designer Depot

THE FIRST in a series of midnight madness sale events this year at Designer Depot reels off tomorrow. Designer Depot offers 50-80 percent off the regular prices. In store are quality apparel by Levi's, Jag, Pink Soda, Big and Small, DXS, Particles and Molecules, Excez, Jeanstation, Verve, Urban Outlet, Marked Down Surplus, Creative Concept, Ibiza and Ritratto; shoes by Skechers, Fred Perry, American Fits, Couberg Brown and Durante Perrie, Converse, Kickers and GBX; assorted merchandise from fashion accessories to toiletries, candles and soaps are offered by Intersection and Casabella, Talipapa, Gazebo, Shainine and Maldita at popular choices. Designer Depot is at the corner of Quirino Avenue and South Superhighway.

GOINGS-ON

WORKSHOP. A one-day workshop on "Finding Your Life Purpose" is set on March 31, 9 a.m.-5p.m., at the Center for Health and Creative Arts (Chacra). The workshop will benefit fresh graduates, transitioning professionals, those starting a new venture, and anyone who wants to get more out of life. Call Chacra at 426-5368 or434-5361.

RECITAL. The MCO Foundation and The Philippine High School for the Arts, with Equitable PCIBank and 98.7, present the second part of the MCO Young Artists' Recital Series featuring Karla Maria Dino in a solo piano recital on March 18, 3:30 p.m., at the Francisco Santiago Hall of Equitable PCI Bank. Admission is free. Call 818-1403, 813-3849, 840-7000 local 2258 and 2630.

GARDEN SHOW. "Gardenia Flora Arte" is ongoing until March 25, at the LG/F near Toby's area, SM City Fairview, QC. Call 800-1140 or 512-0205

LAUNCHING. The College Editors Guild of the Philippines National Capital Region will launch the Lunduyan 2001 Regional Journalism Workshop and its 24th Regional Student Press Congress on March 22-26, in Baluarte, Vigan, Ilocos Sur. Call 493-2764, 536-6937, (0917) 641-2870 or e-mail cegpnational@edsamall.com.ph.

ART EXHIBIT. Misc Gallery and the City of Davao present "Eclectic 6—Araw ng Dabaw Y2001 Painting Collection." It features the best works of six local artists of Davao City. The exhibit runs until today at 533 Manga Ave., Juna Subdivision, Matina, Davao City.

ANNOUNCEMENT. The University of the Philippines Library Science Alumni Association Inc. with the Misamis Oriental Librarians Association and the Liceo de Cagayan University will hold its Second Regional Alumni Institute on March 30-31 at the Liceo de Cagayan University, Cagayan de Oro City. All UP-ILS alumni and colleagues in the Visayas-Mindanao are invited to join the event.

SUMMER CLASSES. READ at Psychpros invites you to "Heat the Books" this summer. Let your child have fun reading and learning as we open the pages of wonderful books that would surely capture his imagination and creativity. Kids aged 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12 are welcome to join. This will be held at Agcor Building, Katipunan Avenue, Loyola Heights, QC. Call 436-0229.

SCIENCE FAIR. The 4th Intel Philippine Science Fair national finals is slated today at the UP Bahay ng Alumni, Diliman, QC. The fair will showcase one-of-a-kind scientific projects made by 96 of the country's top student-scientists.

SEMINAR. ProActive Center for Training is holding a seminar/workshop on restaurant management on March 26-April 3, at the Triple V Express, 2/L Bridgeway, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

PHOTO CONTEST. The Association of Photo Studios of the Philippines will conduct a wedding shootout and photo contest on March 31 at the Verde Island Resort in Batangas. Deadline for registration is on March 18. Call 911-1184.

WORKSHOP. The Philippine Society of Librarians and Information Specialists Inc. will conduct a seminar-workshop on "The Emerging Technologies on Library and Archival Management," at Hotel Fleuris, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, on April 16-18. Call 929-2180, 724-1994, 527-3503, 552-6855, 526-3131 local 4411.

PROGRAM. All elementary and high school teachers are invited to attend the Life Sciences Program sponsored by the Department of Biology of UP Manila CAS on April 4-6 and April 9-11. Call 526-5861.

JULIE and Rose Borromeo take a bow after the presentation of "A Summer Night's Dream."

Dance Arts to hold summer workshop

A MUSICAL called "A Summer Night's Dream," an adaptation of Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream," was staged successfully last year by the Performing Arts Foundation. It was a dance and musical theater presentation featuring all forms of dance—ballet, jazz, tap and flamenco including the International Dance Sport ballroom. Those dances were woven like a tapestry, together with acting and singing.

The interaction of the different forms of stage skills, together with the hard work and talent of guest teacher Martin Palmer, the faculty (Russian dancer Andre Roslovtsev, Patricia Borromeo-Coronel, Julie Borromeo and daughters Maricar Aragon and Anamarie Quirino) and the students contributed to a successful show.

This year, Performing Arts Foundation will conduct its Summer Dance and Musical Theater Workshop on March 26. The culminating showcase, which will include all the students beginners and advanced, will be held at the Meralco Theater on May 24.

Enrolment is on going. Call 724-3476 or 727-5651.

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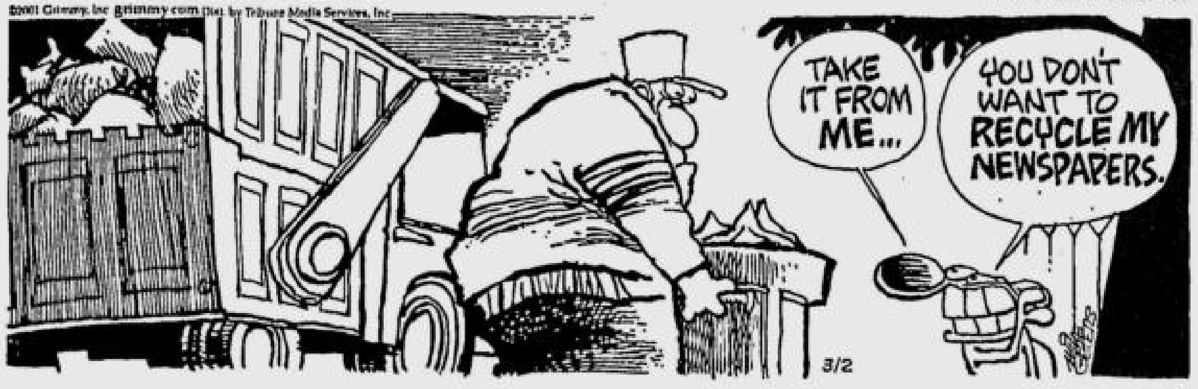
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS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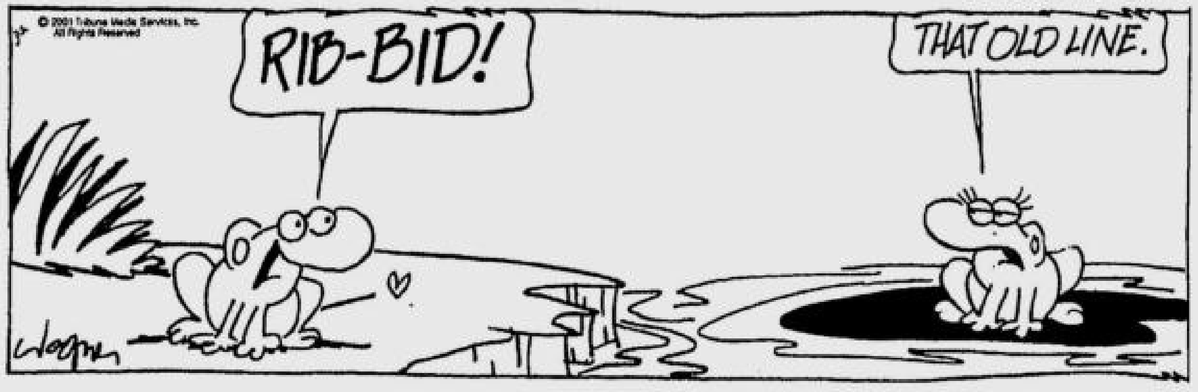
TAKE IT FROM ME...
YOU DON'T WANT TO RECYCLE MY NEWSPAPERS.
3/2

ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER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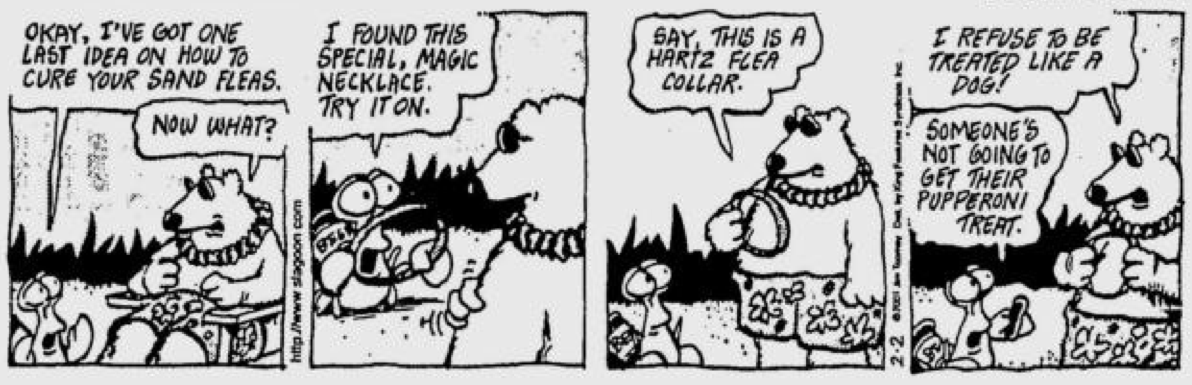
RIB-BID!
THAT OLD LINE.
Wagner

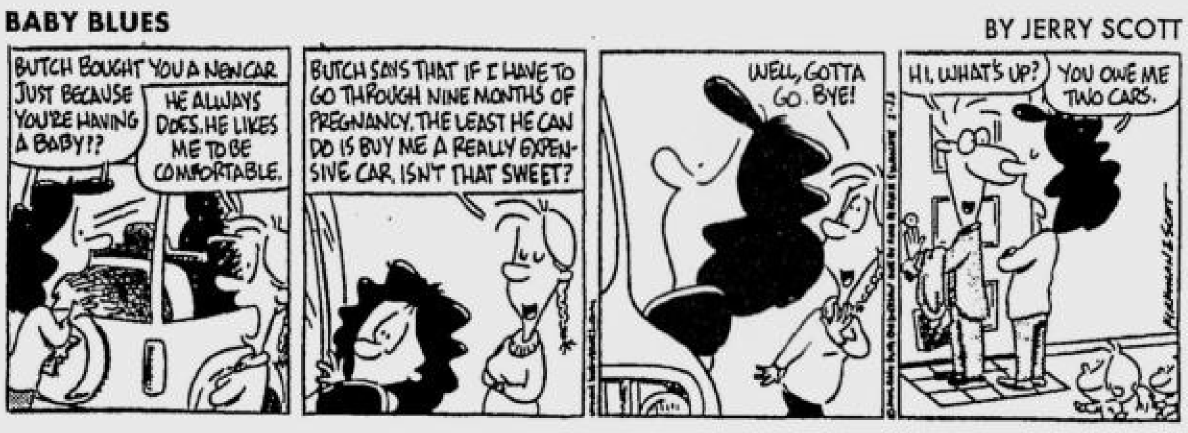
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


OKAY, I'VE GOT ONE LAST IDEA ON HOW TO CURE YOUR SAND FLEAS.
NOW WHAT?
I FOUND THIS SPECIAL, MAGIC NECKLACE. TRY IT ON.
http://www.slagoon.com
SAY, THIS IS A HARTZ FLEA COLLAR.
2-2
I REFUSE TO BE TREATED LIKE A DOG!
SOMEONE'S NOT GOING TO GET THEIR PUPPERONI TREAT.

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


BUTCH BOUGHT YOU A NEW CAR JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE HAVING A BABY!?
HE ALWAYS DOES. HE LIKES ME TO BE COMFORTABLE.
BUTCH SAYS THAT IF I HAVE TO GO THROUGH NINE MONTHS OF PREGNANCY, THE LEAST HE CAN DO IS BUY ME A REALLY EXPENSIVE CAR. ISN'T THAT SWEET?
WELL, GOTTA GO. BYE!
HI, WHAT'S UP?
YOU OWE ME TWO CARS.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jerry Lewis, Kate Nelligan, Isabelle Huppert, Bernardo Bertolucci, Pat Nixon, **Happy Birthday:** It is most important to be prepared. If you can't do everything yourself, get help. You will have to balance your personal and your professional life carefully to move forward in a positive manner. There will be lots of highs and lows this year, and you must be willing to deal with every issue that arises. Take on too much yourself and you will suffer. Gauge your time wisely and win. Your numbers: 13, 19, 26, 31, 38, 44

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Your quick wit will win you points. Voice your opinion, but don't be too pushy or opposition will arise. Physical activity will be rewarding. You will have the energy to get things finished.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You should put your efforts into fixing up your home, not arguing with those you live with. Don't let your stubborn nature lead to irreconcilable differences.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Your emotional partner will be upset if you have been neglecting your duties. Someone you have become friends with has greater interest in you than you realize. Tread carefully.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't let yourself be dragged into a love triangle. Be sure that whomever you date is free and clear of past involvements. Children will play an important role today.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Try to include your family in any social events that arise. You need to build a closer bond to those you love. Your entertaining nature will win favors from those you deal with at work.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Emotionally, things won't run too smoothly today. Try not to let your mate corner you. This is not the time to be faced with a situation that could result in isolation. Busy yourself with programs that will enhance your looks.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Your friends or relatives will be able to give you some good advice if you confide in them. You need to get out and enjoy yourself more often. Look for inexpensive but entertaining activities.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Your life will stabilize if you can restrict yourself to a tight budget. Don't let others talk you into donating to organizations that you believe in but really can't afford to help.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Put your energy, which will be hard to contain, to good use by competing in sports events, socializing with friends, or spending time with the one you love.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can learn if you listen to others. You need to take a few steps back and decide if you are really going in a direction that will satisfy your needs.

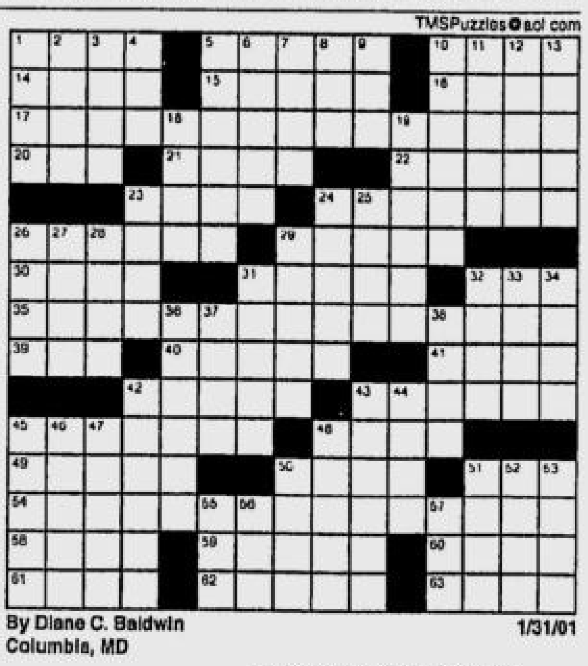
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Take time to do things for yourself. You've been so busy doing for everyone else, that you've forgotten what it's like to be pampered.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Arguments will lead to anxiety and frustration, not to mention loneliness and hurt. Don't overreact to your partner's lack of time or attention. Keep busy. Get involved in your own interests and you won't be by yourself for long.

Birthday Baby: You're always on the go. You have a happy-go-lucky approach to life and will always take the pathway that leads to the unusual. You are sensitive, inventive and unique.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD

1/31/01

ACROSS
1 Tale on a grand scale
5 Symbol of achievement
10 Belgrade resident
14 Nocturnal raptors
15 Chocolate tree
16 Manitoba tribe member
17 Don't hesitate
20 Peculiar
21 Kangaroo kid
22 "Daniel Deronda" author
23 Henry VIII's last Catherine
24 Lymphoid organs
26 Four-base hits
29 Loafers and wingtips
30 Word of woe
31 Descendent
32 Sushi delicacy
35 Don't keep calm
39 The Chinese "way"
40 Wanders
41 Eye lasciviously
42 Knickknack
43 Fixate on
45 Disproved
48 Hee-haw
49 Proficient
50 Young seals
51 Extension
54 Don't hold back
58 Zenith
59 Way from a man's heart
60 Schism
61 Kernel
62 Memento
63 Solemn promise

DOWN
1 On one's own
2 Filled with wonder
3 Delighted
4 Poisonous snake
5 Play group?
6 Thirst-quencher
7 Sore
8 Sally Field film, "Norma __"
9 One of Disney's dwarfs
10 Libra's symbol
11 Bert's muppet pal
12 Brief looksee
13 Borscht vegetables
18 Partly open
19 Montana's capital
23 Mexican money
24 Is skittish
25 Milne's Winnie
26 Rake handle
27 Earthenware jar
28 BLT addition
29 Jerk
31 Sober
32 Verge
33 Building wings
34 Majors and Grant
36 Tutti-__ ice cream
37 Links warning
38 Too curious
42 Bowl-shaped
43 Parentless child
44 Army post
45 Indian royalty
46 Elicit
47 __ fatale
48 Mesa's cousin?
50 The other white meat
51 Piece of Puccini
52 River craft
53 Legend
55 __ "King" Cole
56 Excessively
57 To's partner

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

E	L	K	S		S	A	N	D		N	O	M	A	D
G	U	N	K		I	G	O	R		I	M	A	G	E
G	R	E	A	T	D	A	N	E		C	A	M	E	L
S	E	E	T	H	E		E	N	S	E	N	A	D	A
			E	A	R	P		C	U	T				
S	O	T		W	E	A	T	H	E	R	V	A	N	E
U	R	A	L		A	R	R			Y	O	K	E	L
M	I	R	E		L	E	A	P	S		L	I	S	I
A	B	O	V	E			C	L	U		E	T	T	A
C	I	T	I	Z	E	N	K	A	N	E		A	S	S
				E	M	I		N	D	A	K			
C	R	A	C	K	U	P	S		A	S	I	M	O	V
L	A	N	A	I		P	E	N	N	Y	L	A	N	E
A	R	O	S	E		E	R	I	C		L	U	T	E
P	E	N	A	L		R	E	N	E		S	L	O	P

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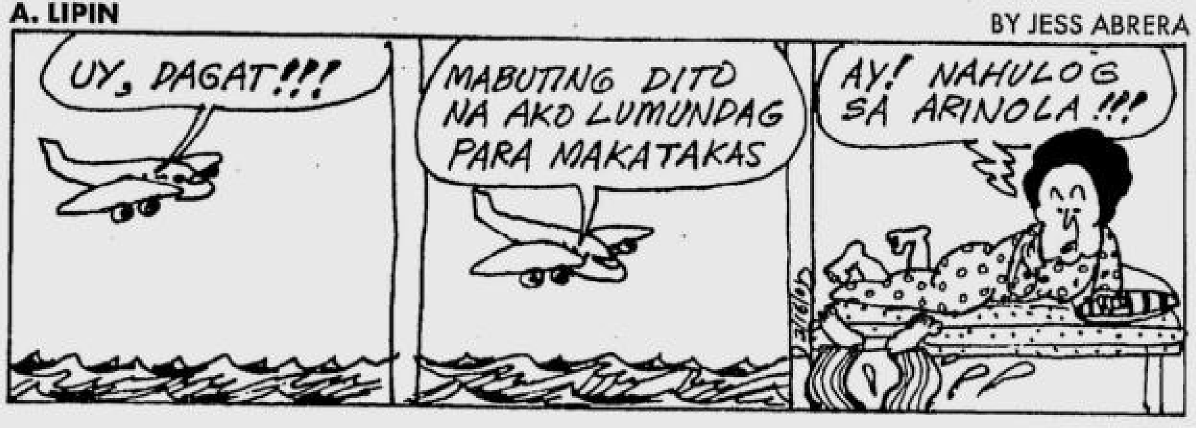
1/31/01

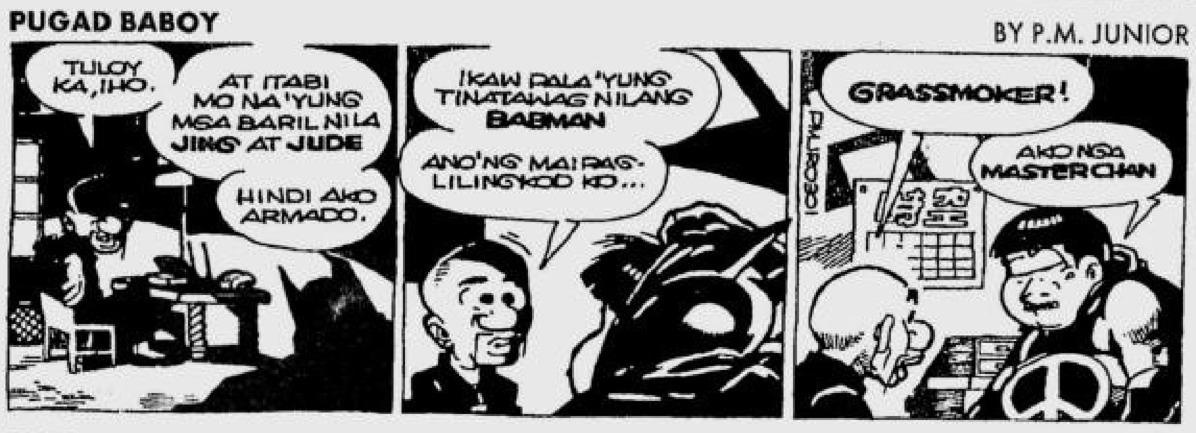
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


UY, DAGAT!!!
MABUTING DITO NA AKO LUMUNDAG PARA MAKATAKAS
AY! NAHULOG SA ARINOLA!!!

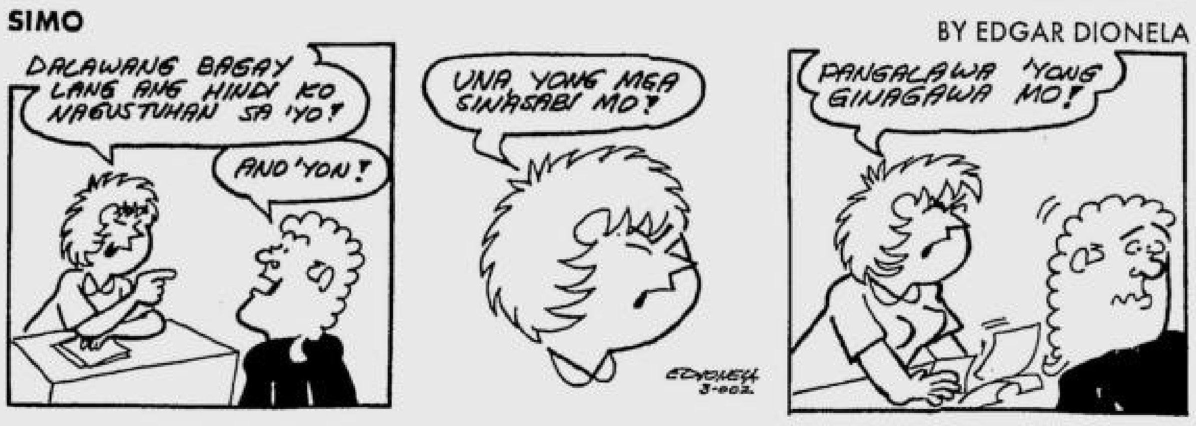
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


TULOY KA, IHO.
AT ITABI MO NA 'YUNG MGA BARIL NILA JING AT JUDE
HINDI AKO ARMADO.
IKAW PALA 'YUNG TINATAWAG NILANG BABMAN
ANO'NG MAIPAG-LILINGKOD KO...
GRASSMOKER!
AKO NGA MASTERCHAN

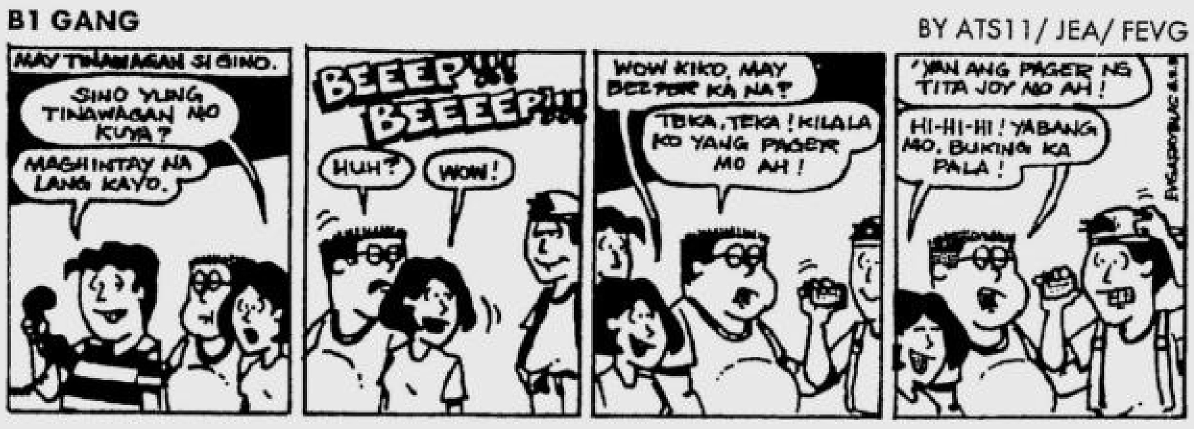
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


DALAWANG BAGAY LANG ANG HINDI KO NAGUSTUHAN SA 'YO!
ANO 'YON!
UNA, YONG MGA SINASABI MO!
PANGALAWA 'YONG GINAGAWA MO!

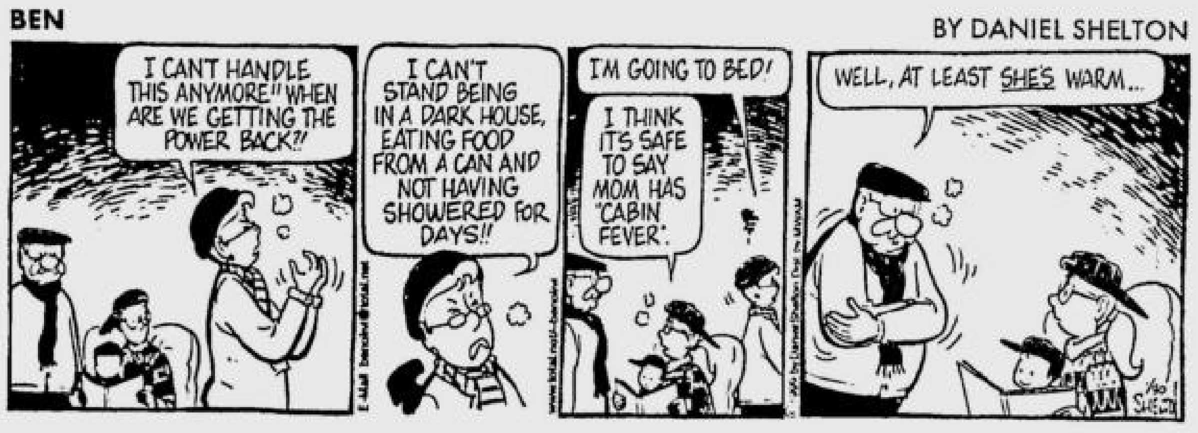
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


MAY TINAWAGAN SI GINO.
SINO YUNG TINAWAGAN MO KUYA?
MAGHINTAY NA LANG KAYO.
BEEEP!!! BEEEEP!!!
HUH?
WOW!
WOW KIKO, MAY BEEPER KA NA?
TEKA, TEKA! KILALA KO YANG PAGER MO AH!
'YAN ANG PAGER NG TITA JOY MO AH!
HI-HI-HI! YABANG MO. BUKING KA PALA!

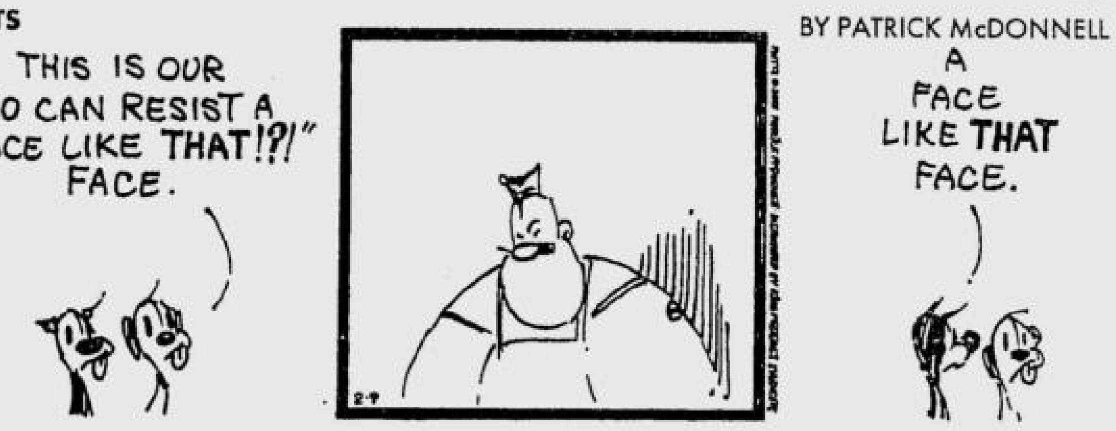
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I CAN'T HANDLE THIS ANYMORE!! WHEN ARE WE GETTING THE POWER BACK?!
I CAN'T STAND BEING IN A DARK HOUSE, EATING FOOD FROM A CAN AND NOT HAVING SHOWERED FOR DAYS!!
I'M GOING TO BED!
I THINK IT'S SAFE TO SAY MOM HAS "CABIN FEVER".
WELL, AT LEAST SHE'S WARM...

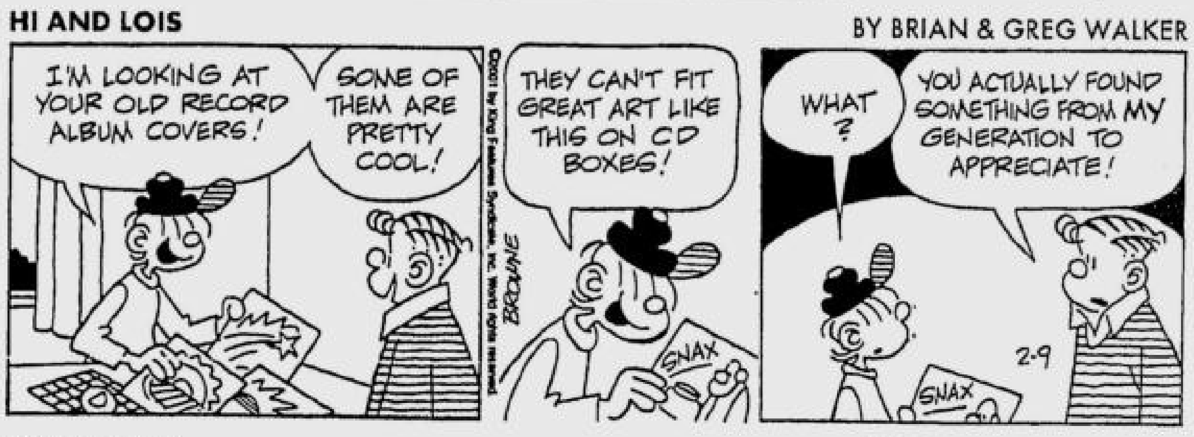
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THIS IS OUR "WHO CAN RESIST A FACE LIKE THAT!?!" FACE.
2-9
A FACE LIKE THAT FACE.

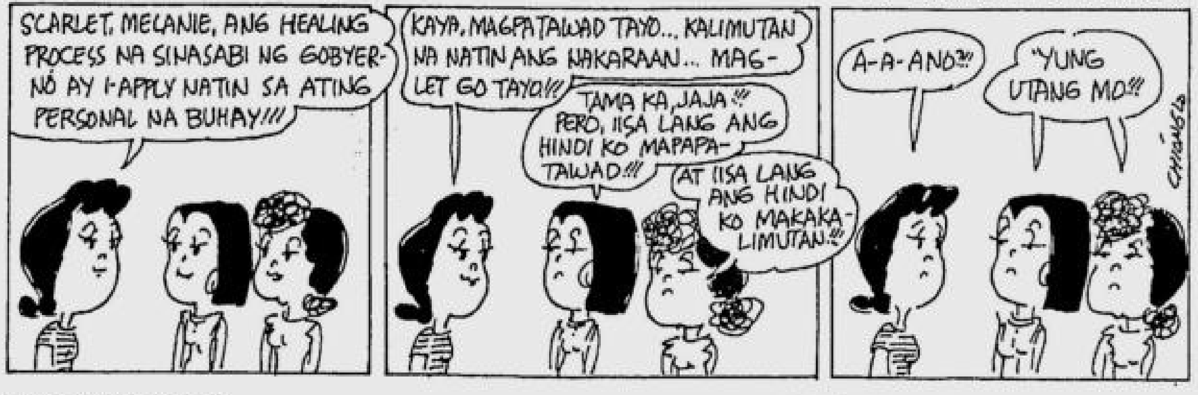
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


I'M LOOKING AT YOUR OLD RECORD ALBUM COVERS!
SOME OF THEM ARE PRETTY COOL!
©2001 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
BROWNE
THEY CAN'T FIT GREAT ART LIKE THIS ON CD BOXES!
SNAX
WHAT?
YOU ACTUALLY FOUND SOMETHING FROM MY GENERATION TO APPRECIATE!
2-9

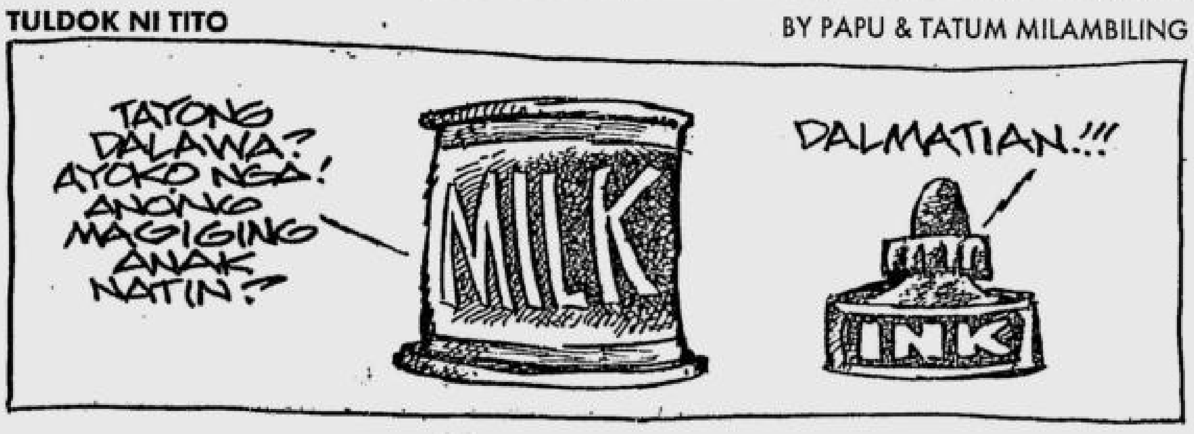
LOVEKNOTS

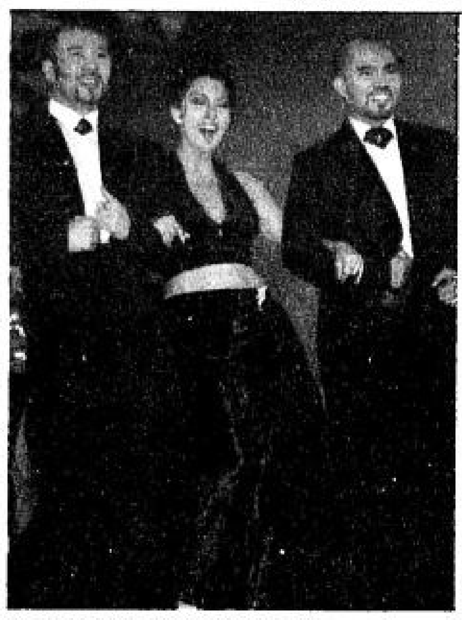
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SCARLET, MELANIE, ANG HEALING PROCESS NA SINASABI NG GOBYERNO AY I-APPLY NATIN SA ATING PERSONAL NA BUHAY!!!
KAYA, MAGPATAWAD TAYO... KALIMUTAN NA NATIN ANG NAKARAAN... MAG-LET GO TAYO!!!
TAMA KA, JAJA!!! PERO, IISA LANG ANG HINDI KO MAPAPA-TAWAD!!!
AT IISA LANG ANG HINDI KO MAKAKA-LIMUTAN!!!
A-A-ANO?!!
'YUNG UTANG MO!!!
CHIONGLO

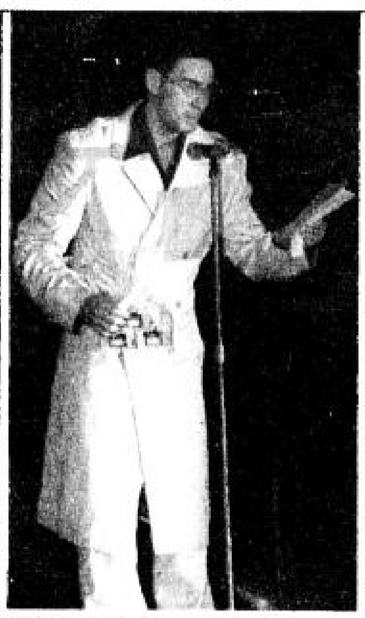
TULDOK NI TITO

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING

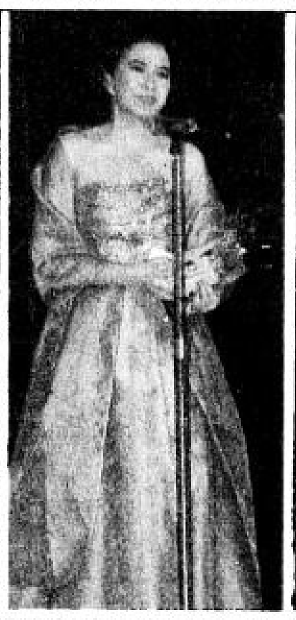

TAYONG DALAWA? AYOKO NGA! ANONG MAGIGING ANAK NATIN?
MILK
DALMATIAN!!!
INK



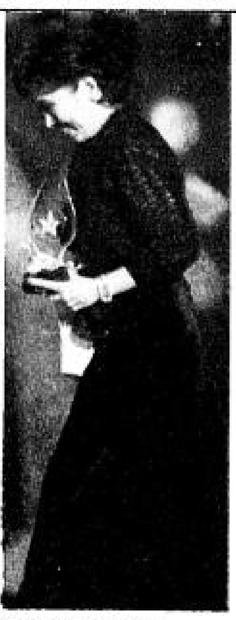
BELLY-BUTTON BLUES. Pops Fernandez in a three-piece velvet number that's neither here nor there. The waist is too high, the top too wide.



LIGHT 'MATRIX.' Carlos Morales in an ill-fitting trench coat wins best actor and male Star of the Night. It seems not even his inner collar agrees.



STAR of the Night Lorna Tolentino opts for an aqua gown with beaded bodice.



THREE MORE YEARS? Mayor Vilma Santos looks every inch the part in a beaded black top and velvet skirt.

Starry, starry fashion—and some flukes

By Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Romy Homillada

ASIDE from recognizing outstanding work in films, show-biz events such as the recent Star Awards for Movies have become virtual windows to a celebrity's fashion sense—or perhaps the lack of it.

While this year's edition had more than its share of the usual fashion victims, it also produced a handful of fashion gems. And it took a reluctant celebrity to show tinseltown's loveliest a thing or two on how to look the part.

A radiant Lucy Torres made heads turn in a beaded halter with a trumpet skirt by Randy Ortiz. The red number with glittery beads in the right places further stressed Lucy's fair complexion and drew attention to her face.

Richard Gomez's better half limited her accessories to a pair of dangling pearl earrings and an artificial rose below the neckline. Of course, she came to the show with the best accessory of all: a tall and dashing leading man in an off-white barong with Chinese collar by Patis Tesoro.

In our book, Lucy was the real female Star of the Night, not Lorna Tolentino. All right, LT carried her strapless aqua gown with matching sheer stole by Danilo Franco with poise. But it wasn't exactly her best outfit. No, sir. Except for the impressive beadwork on the bodice, the gown betrayed poor construction because it lacked shape.

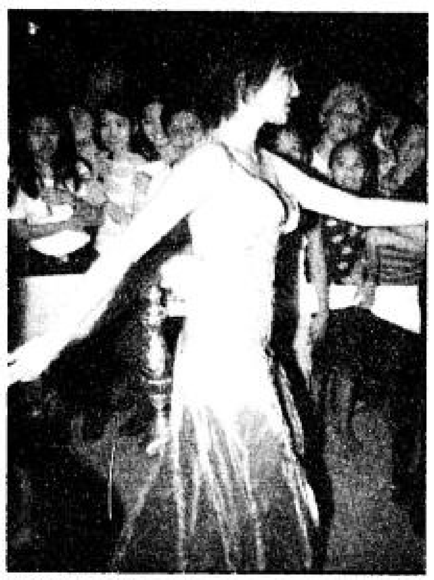
After a series of fashion fiascoes last year, Elizabeth Oropesa played it safe and simple this time with an eggplant-colored gown by Eric Pineda that flattered her skin tone and figure.

A low V-neck and slanted beadwork in silver and violet on one side of the skirt and bodice made the seasoned actress slimmer and younger by several years. For a change, Elizabeth managed to look decent without losing her own brand of sex appeal. The new pixy hairstyle also had a lot to do with the look's success. We only wish more attention was given to those loose sleeves.

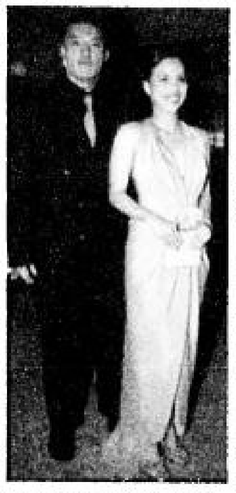
In keeping with her new stature as mayor of Lipa, Vilma Santos also went the same route in a beaded black top matched with a gored velvet skirt also by Danilo Franco. Okay, the outfit failed to give her the usual spark, but after bagging another best actress trophy and a strong chance of winning another three-year term, does the Star for all Seasons need any?

Mixed results

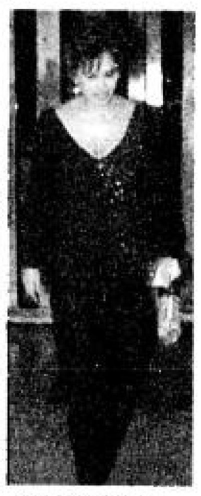
After making a strong comeback in a draped halter by Fanny Serrano in December, Cherie Gil again chose a variation of the gown with mixed results. This time she slipped into a silver blue halter with a sprinkle of sugar beads on the bodice, and beaded lines and hints of yellow and indigo on the skirt. Simply put, the number looked too busy.



PUMPED UP. Is this the right way for a movie star to walk? Bold star Rica Peralejo in a spaghetti-strapped gown with cascading beads



MR. CLEAN. Mark Anthony Fernandez, with Janna Victoria, looked dapper for a change in a tone-on-tone ensemble composed of a black double-breasted suit, a black shirt and a silvery tie. The sleeves could use some improvement.

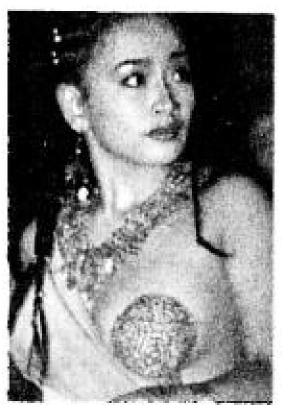


SEASONED WITH TIME. Elizabeth Oropesa looks slimmer, thanks to slanted beadwork and a deep décolleté

Cherie's long neck, broad shoulders and firm arms saved the night, but those big prints were bound to wreak havoc on the figures of lesser-endowed stars.

Angel Aquino opted for a strapless corset with a paneled skirt. The model-turned-actress did right in paring down her accessories, but alas she chose the wrong necklace (was it made of leather?) to go with the metallic gown.

Of course, the evening produced its share of entertainment from celebrities in mind-boggling or laughable attires fit for the incinerator. Leading the posse of oddities was Sunshine Dizon in a cowgirl outfit, complete with a pint-sized hat, that was bound to leave even the healthiest cattle who stare at it with mad cow disease.



NOT AN INVITING SITE. Halina Perez goes overboard with braided hairdo, folkloric accessories, one-sided draped gown and a beaded nipple patch.

The former child star, who seemed forever stuck in the awkward stage, slipped into a jacket and matching pair of trousers with beads, embroidery and tasseled fringes. Bulky and horizontal decors on the legs made her look fatter. Well, call it the Tex-Mex version of bad dressing: a bastardized fusion of bohemian chic with the Western look Madonna made popular last year.

The designer who cooked up such a monstrosity was wise enough to do away with a gun holster. Who knows? In one brief, lucid moment, Sunshine might snap back to her senses and shoot the fellow where it counts.

Were members of the local movie press wearing their eyeglasses that night or were they so enamored with Carlos Morales' performance that they also voted him as LT's male counterpart?

Enough

Enough with "The Matrix" look, please. The evening's best actor wore an ill-fitting double-breasted trench coat with matching pants in light blue that creased from the wrong choice of fabric. A trench coat in Manila at the height of summer? It must be his way of psyching himself up before playing an illegal alien in New York. Move over, Billy!

In a bid, perhaps, to look more mature, young star Alessandra da Rossi literally swept the floor in an ill-fitting halter top paired with a serpentina skirt. The old rose and lilac ensemble would have been fine if Alessandra were to play a mannequin. As it was, no amount of ironing could probably prevent the fabric from lumping and folding with her every move. Freeze!

Screen sweetheart-turned-bombshell Rica Peralejo seemed to have overestimated her cosmetic surgeon's capabilities by wearing a spaghetti-strapped gown with loose-fitting caps. The sugar-beaded piece with a see-through skirt was nothing more than a daring but ill-fitting takeoff of gowns Rica probably used to wear when gracing a Santacruzan.

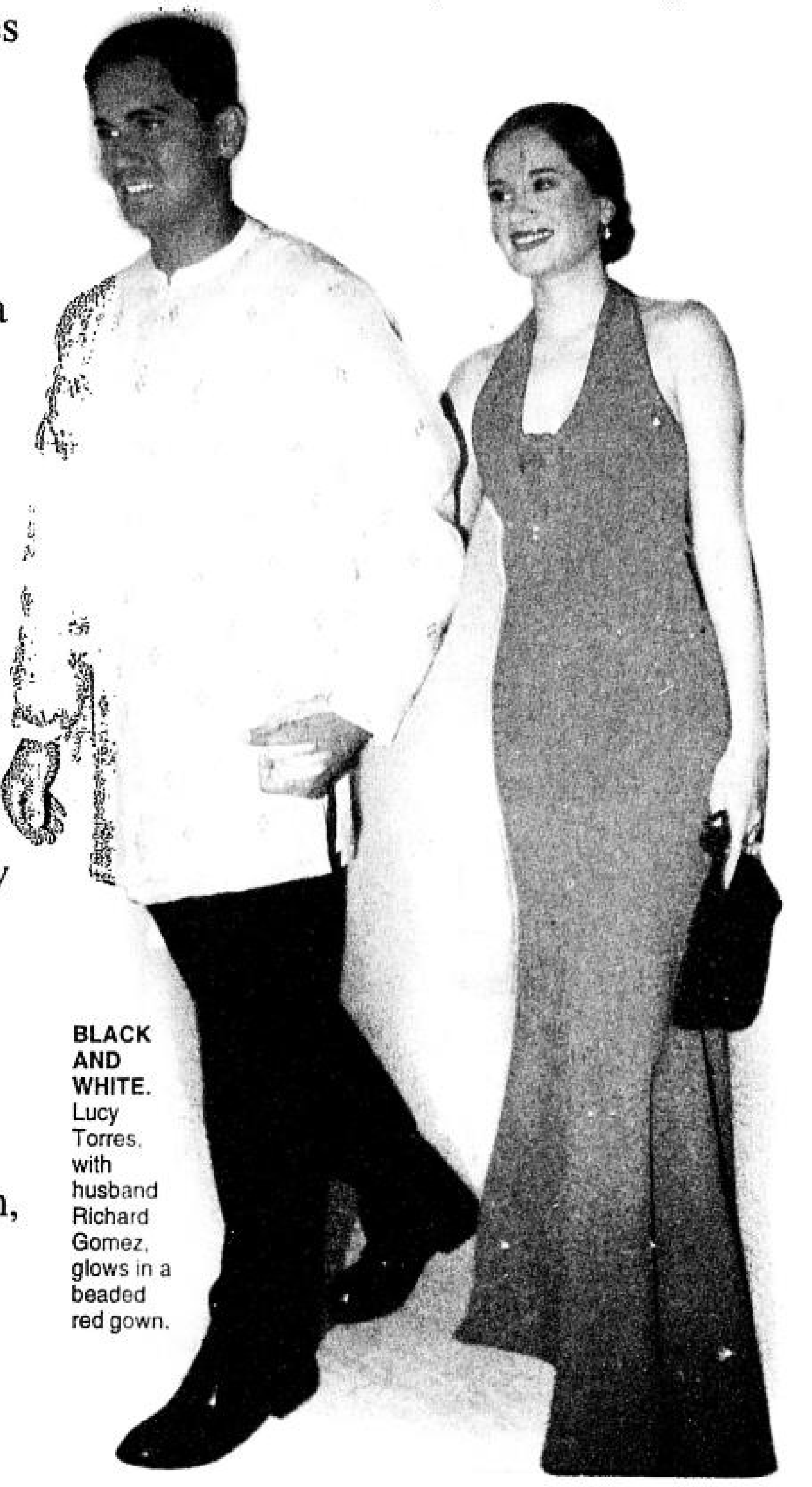
What about Pops Fernandez? The two-piece (three pieces if you include the train) black number made of velour she wore during a production number inspired by the Big M's 2-decade-old "Material Girl" video was neither here nor there. For starters, the shiny fabric looked better on a couch. Worse, the pair of high-waist pants didn't exactly flatter her, well, waist.

Besides, what was the point of hiding her navel when Pops' intention it seemed was to expose her entire belly? By the way, was that a bra top or midriff she wore? Come on, girl, make up your mind.

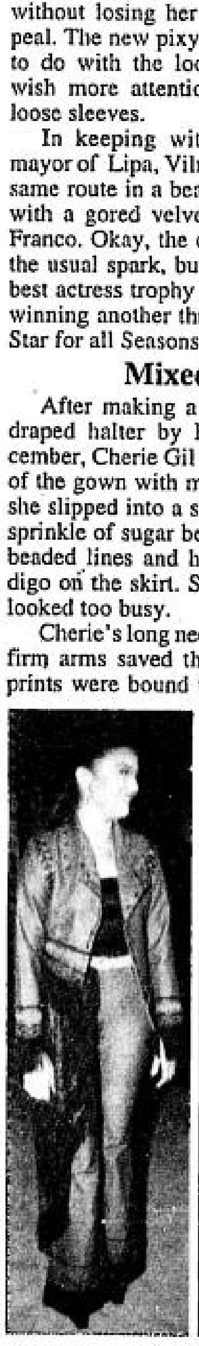
For doing so, Lucy came out looking like a winner.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

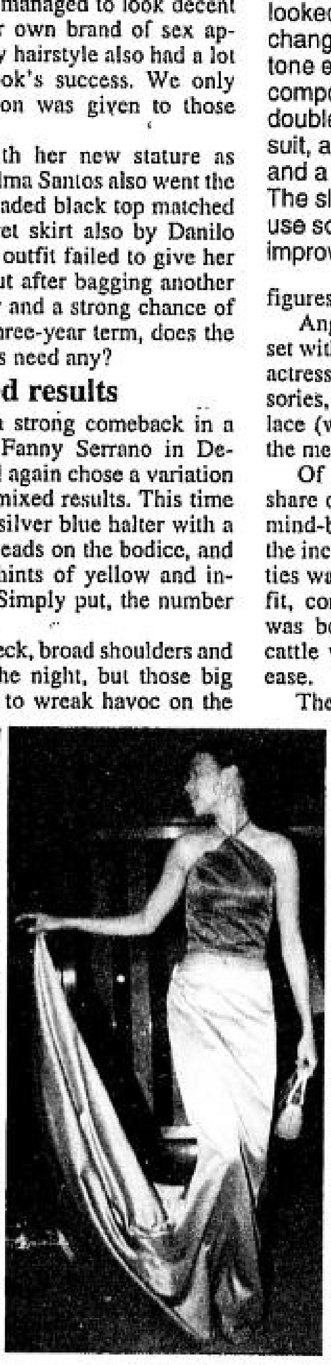
Lucy Torres was luxe chic, La Oropesa played it safe but sure, Vilma Santos looked set for another three years in Lipa, Sunshine Dizon looked like the first Pinay victim of mad cow disease, and Rica Peralejo seemed ready for the Santacruzan, even if that was two months away



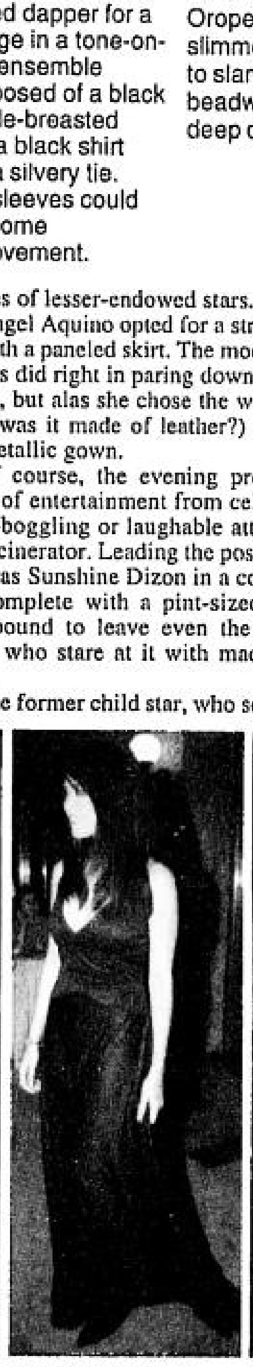
BLACK AND WHITE. Lucy Torres, with husband Richard Gomez, glows in a beaded red gown.



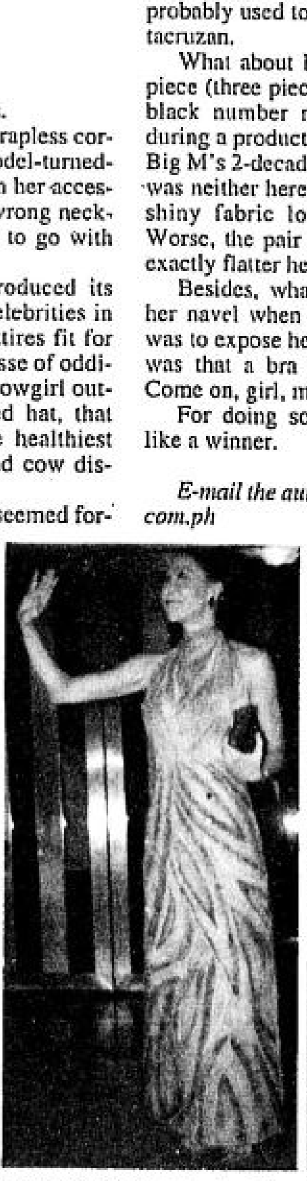
MAD COWGIRL. Where's the horse? Sunshine Dizon seems ready to mount one in this mind-boggling Western getup.



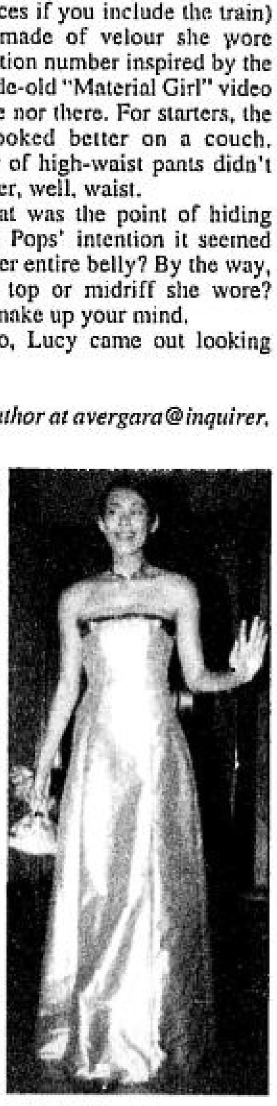
THERE'S HOPE YET. Young star Alessandra da Rossi swims in lumps of satin.



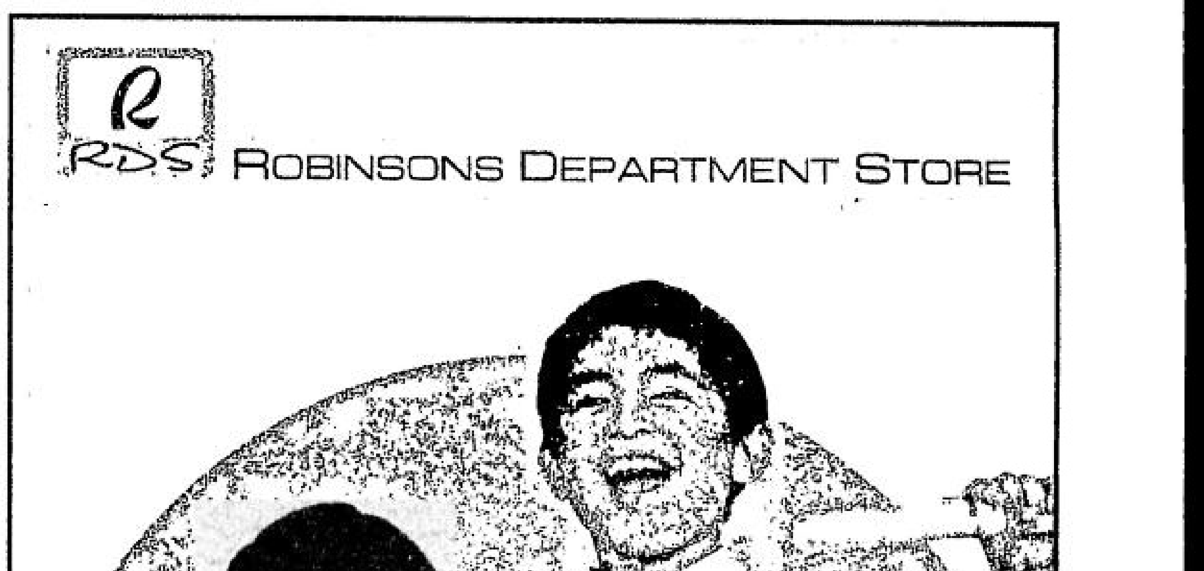
MORTICIA WITH CLEAVAGE. Wild Geneva Cruz opts for a clingy black gown this time.



BUSY BODY. Cherie Gil manages to get away with a halter gown sprinkled with sugar beads on the bodice, beaded lines and hints of yellow and indigo.



GOLDEN girl Angel Aquino in metallic corset and paneled skirt



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Look like rock star

It's hip to break the rules

LOUIS Vuitton's men's ready-to-wear collection pays homage to the '80s. Think "Miami Vice" or David Bowie in the '80s.

American designer Marc Jacobs, head of the helm of the French fashion house, showed some classic suits with long jackets, but plenty of pastels and color including blue pants and pink vests or jackets.

The pop star look is definitely there, mixed with a more contemporary flavor.

Evening wear worn with sportswear, jogging trousers worn teamed with blazers, and shawl-collar dinner jackets and silk knits as daywear, Jacobs achieves his "electro-chic" vision.

For fabrics, Jacobs again relies on classics with a twist; hound's tooth and check, knitwear in heavily stitched silk, and "mercerized" cotton fishnet.

The collection's inventiveness is mirrored by this season's prints. Louis Vuitton T-shirts are "falsely" faded and have small neo-geo graphics on the breast pockets. Memphis-style short-sleeved shirts, swimming trunks and bandannas flaunt the "Clic Clac" print—a postmodern design with multicolored small sticks in tones of gray and orange, sky blue and beige, gray and pink.

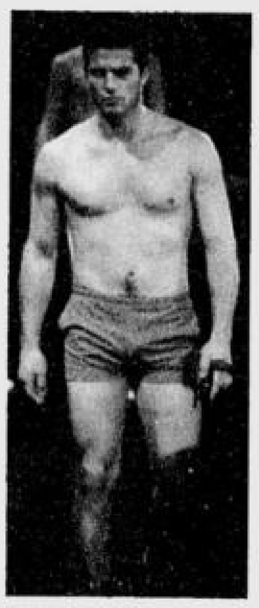
The key to achieving Louis Vuitton's' look this season? Break the rules. Wear casual shoes with an unstructured suit, layer tank tops with faded-print T-shirts and satiny cotton trousers.

Louis Vuitton is at the G/F 6750 Ayala Avenue, Makati. Visit www.vuitton.com

SHIRT, with sleeves rolled up, flows over the body and can be worn alone or with this season's key piece, the short, loose tank top.

DINNER jacket and pleat-front pants

STRAIGHT square-shouldered jacket



SWIMMING trunks

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BIG DISCOUNTS

THERE'S a special reason to celebrate this month's payday at Western Marketing. Avail of great discounts in various home and office appliances as the premier appliance dealer launches the three-day Payday @ Western today.

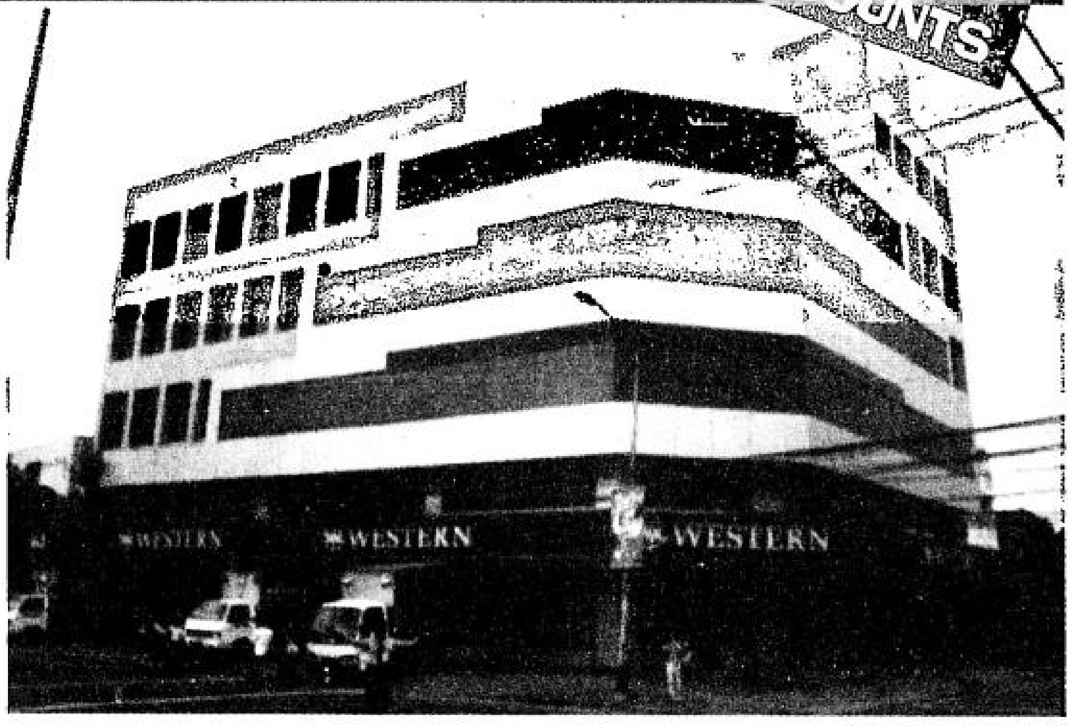
Payday @ Western will be held at the Festival Mall in Alabang, but the same discounts will also be offered in all its 12 other branches. Avail of selected items at zero-interest using your credit cards. Participating credit cards include AIG, BPI, Citibank, Equitable and RCBC.

The appliance exhibit at Festival Mall boasts of eight world-class brands, namely: American Home, Ariston, Aiwa, Philips, Pioneer, Sanyo, Sharp and Sony.

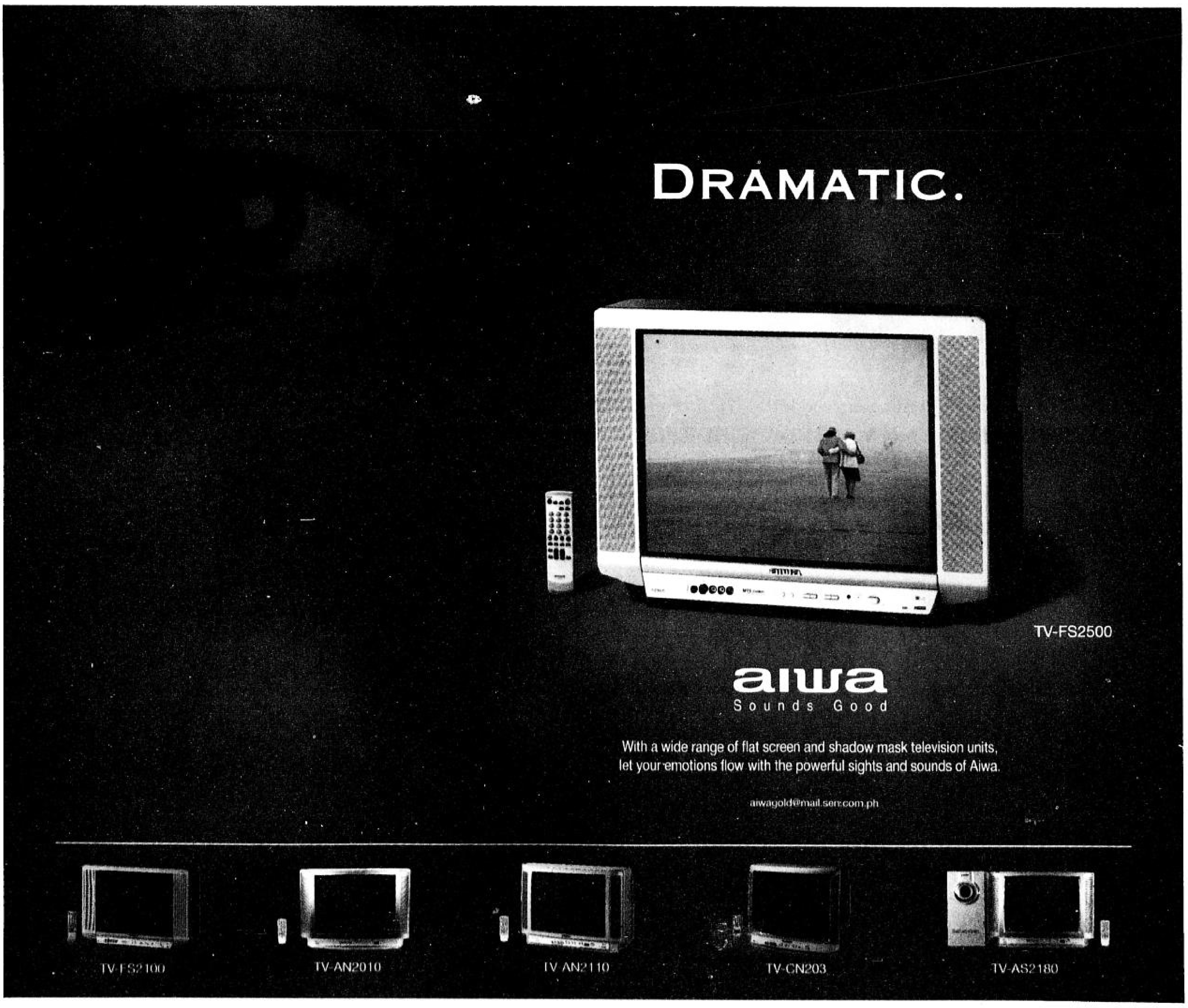
"This is our first major exhibit this year and we expect a huge turnout like what we had in the past. Only top-of-the-line products from the world's leading brands will be offered," says Ed Villaluna of Western Marketing.

P500 OFF

In its commitment to serve its ever-growing clientele, Western Marketing has also relaunched its largest outlet at P. Tuazon in Cubao, Quezon City (see separate story) and opened a branch in Target Mall, Sta. Rosa, Laguna. The P. Tuazon branch employs a modern store layout to highlight Western Marketing's various high-end digital products.



Photos by BETOY JOHNSON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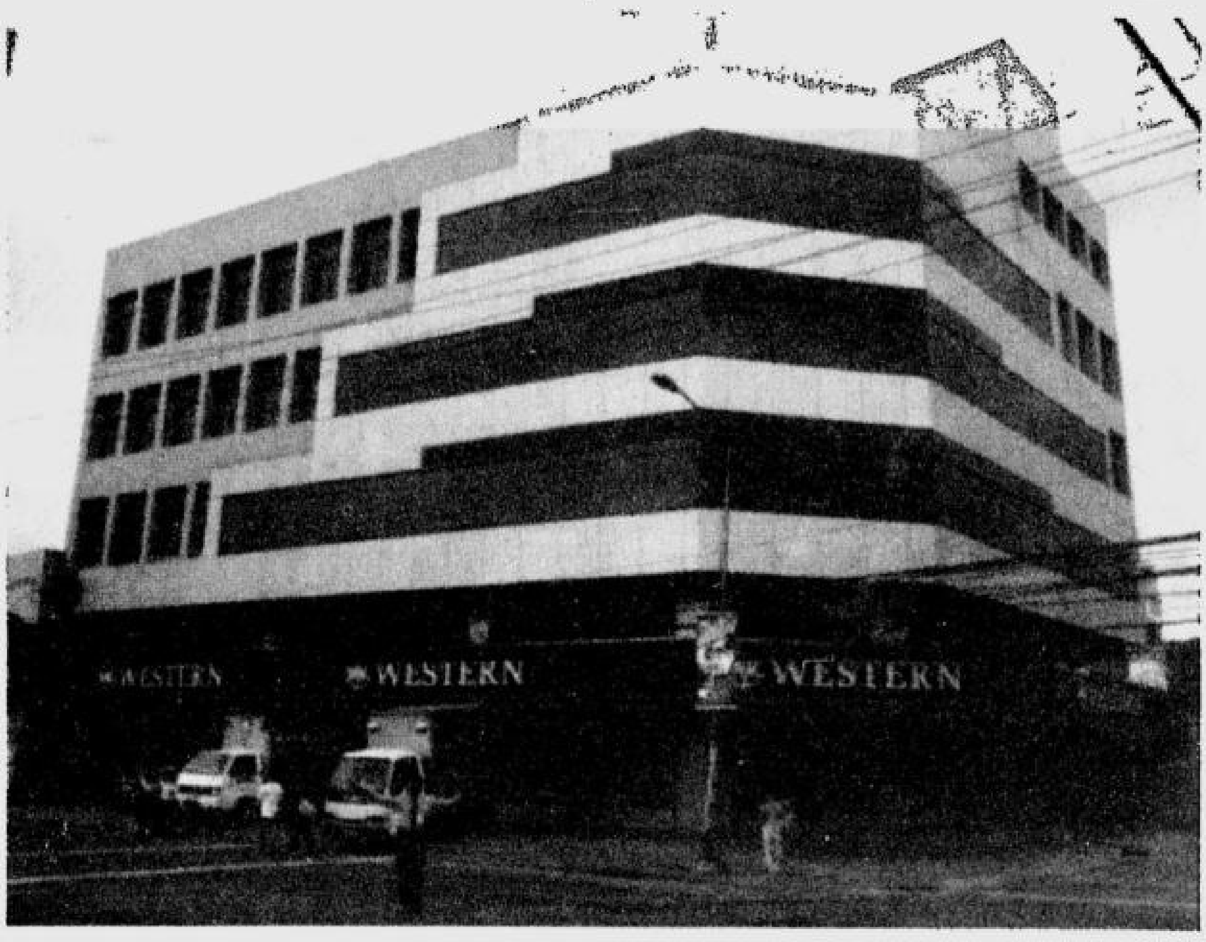
All new appliance gallery on P. Tuazon



EVER noticed this building in blue and turquoise hues when you pass by P. Tuazon in Cubao fronting the landscaped postern of Araneta Center? Unpretentious as it was before, the P. Tuazon branch of Western Marketing can no longer be taken for granted with its extensive collection of home and office appliances and furniture.

The refurbished building boasts of new listening and viewing booths for select brands, exclusive areas for each brand, while each floor is dedicated to allied appliances and furniture. In each section, the appliances are placed at eye-level.

The P. Tuazon branch resonates Western Marketing's newest concept in customer convenience. Each floor, measuring 600 sqm, features a common theme: high-end products on the ground floor, brown lines (audio and video) on the mezzanine, white lines (refrigerators, gas ranges, washing machines and kitchen appliances) on the second floor and home and office furniture on the third.

"Our customers have the whole floor of allied products, so they won't have to go from one floor to another just to compare the brands they like. This in-store layout gives our customers the freedom to move around. With wide aisles we have all the brands and models to fit their budget and lifestyle. We are fortunate to have the biggest appliance store in Cubao," says Liza Dimalibot, P. Tuazon branch assistant.

THE FINEST in home and office furniture

AN ARRAY of kitchen and laundry appliances

Sale
SONY
SONY

THE Sale corner at the mezzanine

AN IMPRESSIVE Pioneer showroom

Designed for the millennium

ALMOST three months into the new millennium, everything goes digital. From banking and financing to logistics and communications, it cannot be denied that a new age of computer technology is currently being adapted all over the world. The kind of technology that travels faster than the speed of light and sound, benefiting mankind as it reaches to more people and farther places in just a blink of an eye. And with this constant evolution, change is inevitable; a threshold to development and progress to complement the fast-paced times.

Western Marketing Corporation, with 36 years of corporate technology and experience behind its name, has acknowledged the importance of such. In the dawning of a new era, the company has embarked in numerous flagship projects which will catapult its image to the pinnacle of achievement. And for its first quarter storm, Western has re-launched a number of its branches in the metro, a mixture of high-tech engineering and an atmosphere that is both classic and futuristic. Specially designed, spacious, and stylish, the newly renovated structures are considered as the "crown jewels" of Western Marketing because it shows what the company is made of and what it is capable of doing in the years to come.

Shopping for your favorite appliance has never been this convenient as Western provides eye level display, wide choices of products ranging from the "essentials" to the latest in digital technology. Offering quality at the most affordable prices, the company's merchandise is also highly energy efficient, environment friendly and durable—qualities that would surely last a lifetime. In Western Marketing, we believe that world-class products need not be expensive because we always put our customers first in our list.

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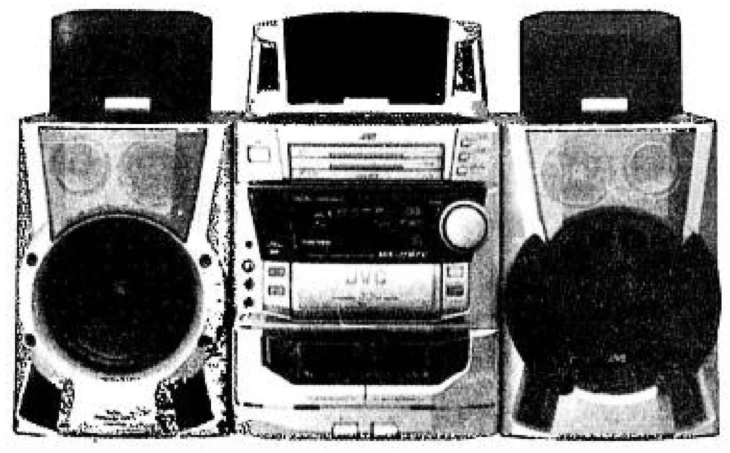

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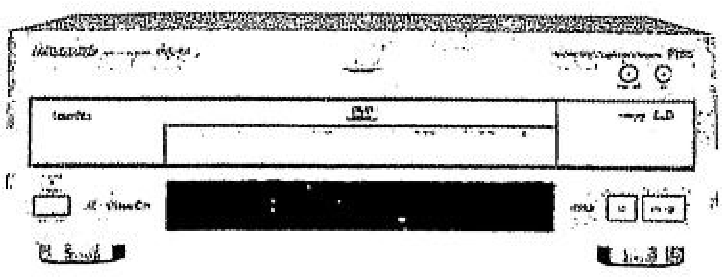

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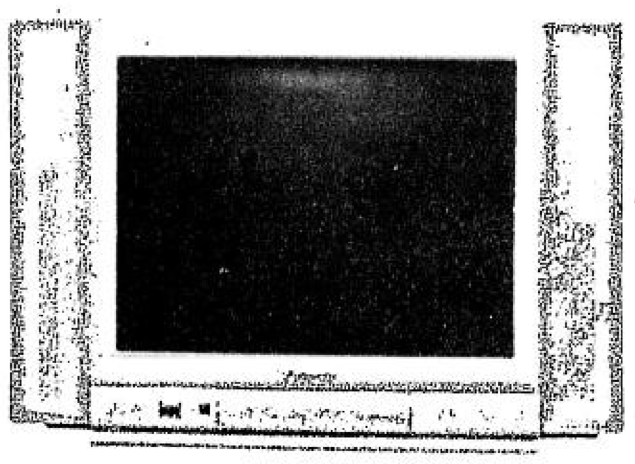

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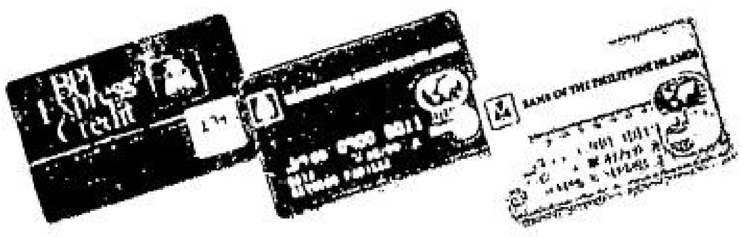
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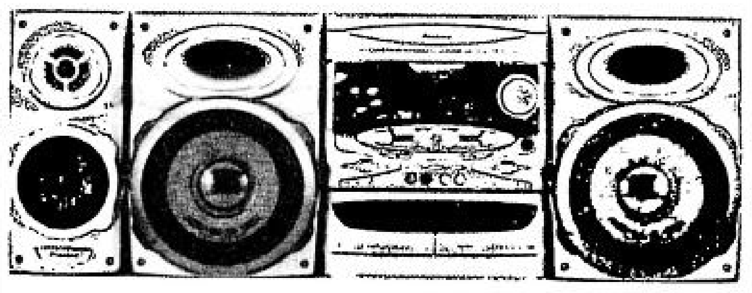

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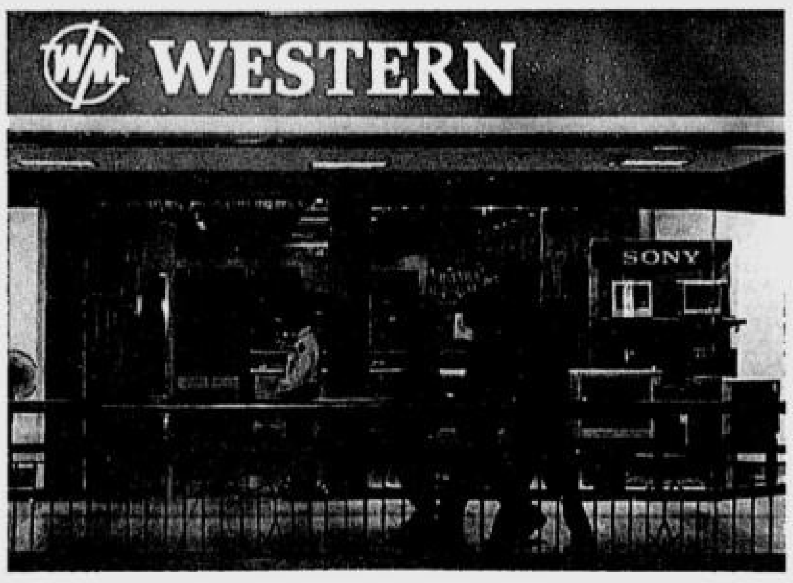
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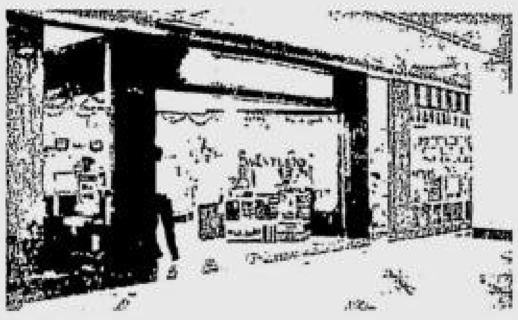

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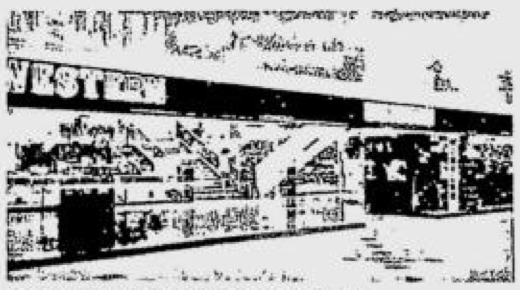

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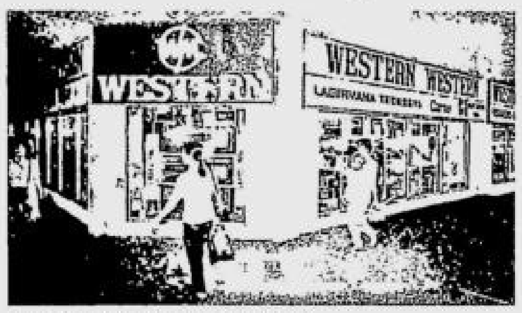
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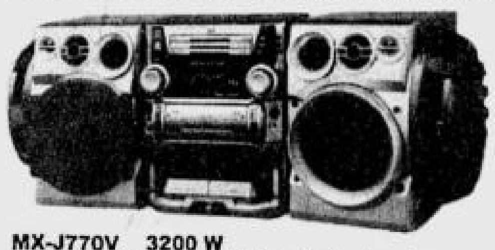

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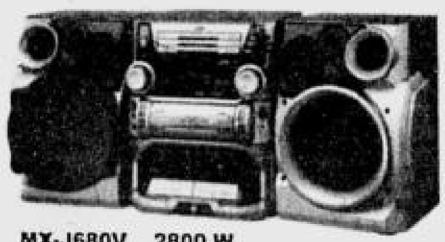

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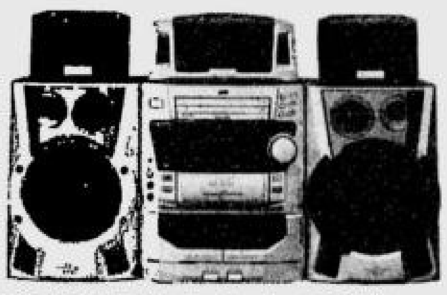

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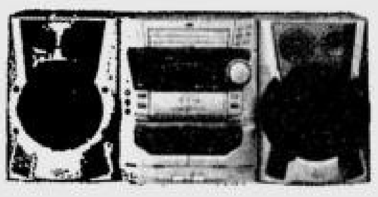

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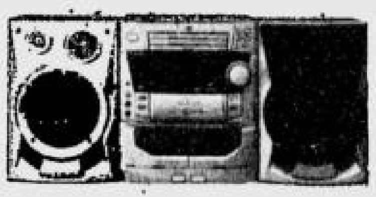

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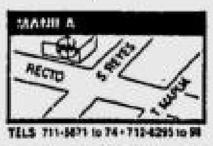
TAKE ADVANTAGE ON OUR SPECIAL...

PAYDAY @ WESTERN

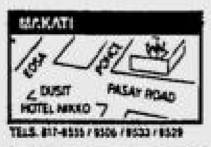
MARCH 16-18, 2001

MANILA


RECTO
S REYES
T MAPUA

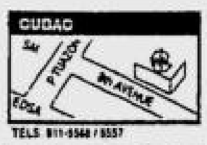
TELS 711-5671 to 74 • 712-6295 to 98

MAKATI


EDSA
PASAY ROAD
DUSIT HOTEL NIKKO

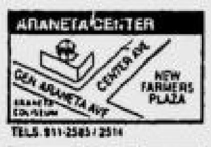
TELS. 817-6535 / 9506 / 9533 / 9529

CUBAO


P TUAZON
9th AVENUE
EDSA

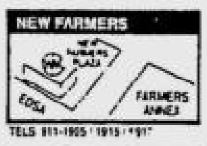
TELS 911-5568 / 5557

ARANETA CENTER


GEN ARANETA AVE
CENTER AVE
NEW FARMERS PLAZA
ARANETA COLISEUM

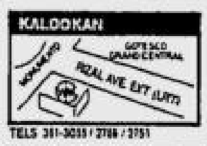
TELS. 911-2585 / 2514

NEW FARMERS


NEW FARMERS PLAZA
EDSA
FARMERS ANNEX

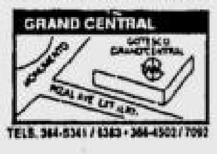
TELS 911-1905 / 1915 / 1917

KALOOKAN


GOTESCO GRAND CENTRAL
RIZAL AVE EXT (LRT)

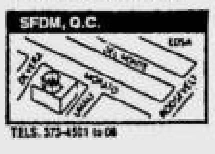
TELS 361-3035 / 2766 / 3751

GRAND CENTRAL


GOTESCO GRAND CENTRAL
RIZAL AVE EXT (LRT)

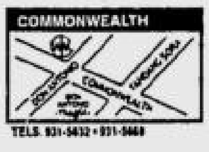
TELS. 364-5341 / 5383 • 364-4503 / 7092

SFDM, Q.C.


EDSA
MORATO

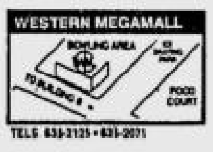
TELS. 373-4501 to 08

COMMONWEALTH


COMMONWEALTH

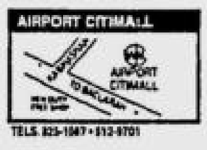
TELS. 931-5632 • 931-5668

WESTERN MEGAMALL


BOWLING AREA
TO BUILDING B
FOOD COURT

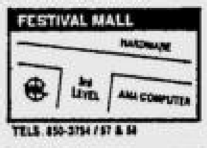
TELS 633-2125 • 631-2071

AIRPORT CITIMALL


AIRPORT CITIMALL
TO BACLARAN

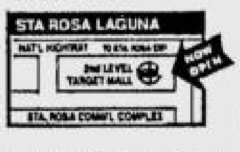
TELS. 825-1567 • 512-9701

FESTIVAL MALL


3rd LEVEL
AMA COMPUTER

TELS. 850-3754 / 57 & 58

STA ROSA LAGUNA


NAT'L HIGHWAY
2nd LEVEL TARGET MALL
NOW OPEN
STA. ROSA COMM'L COMPLEX

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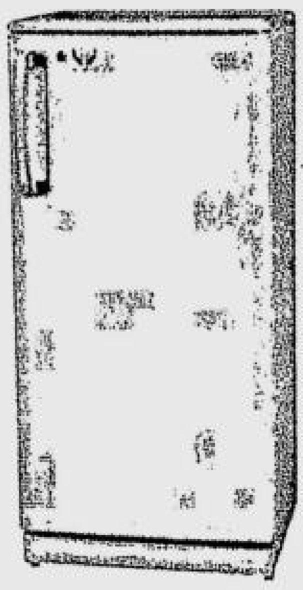
2nd Flr., Jacinta Bldg. 2, EDSA, Brgy. Guadalupe Nuevo, Makati City
Tels. 882-2501 (Connecting all Depts.) • Service Dept. Hotlines 882-2509 / 882-2510

SHOCK FREE rates

BPI 24 months Summer Daze Madness rates

SANYO



6 cu. ft. refrigerator

with FREE gift

P529.62

National

4.5 Kg Washing Machine

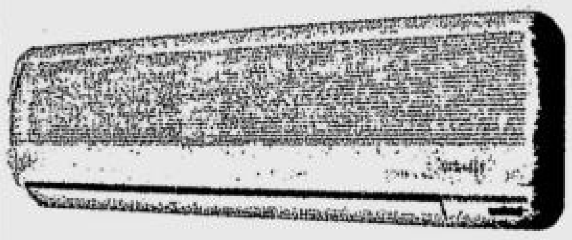
with FREE pop-up laundry hamper

P338.66

UNi-AiR

Split Type Aircon

with FREE umbrella and installation



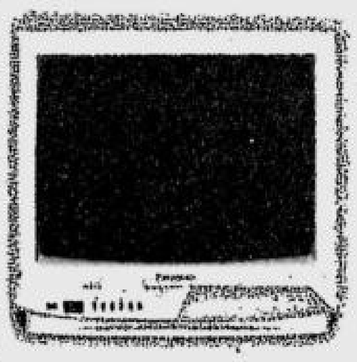
P1,735.50

aiwa

Mini Hi-Fi 3-VCD player w/ built-in subwoofer **P956.92**

with FREE mic & VCD software

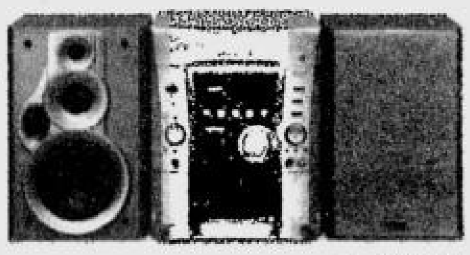
Panasonic



20" CTV with FREE His & Her watch

P562.48

KENWOOD



2400W PMPO 3-disc SVCD/VCD/CD component

with FREE surround speakers & 2 VCDs

P1,196.60

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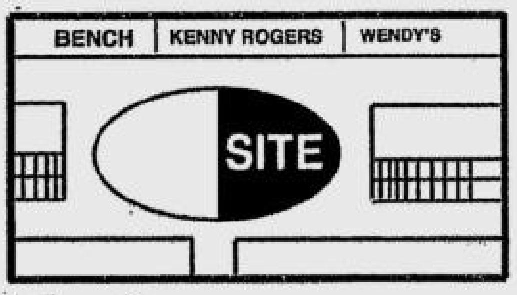
FESTIVAL SUPERMALL

FILINVEST-ALABANG

2nd level Atrium
March 15 - April 4

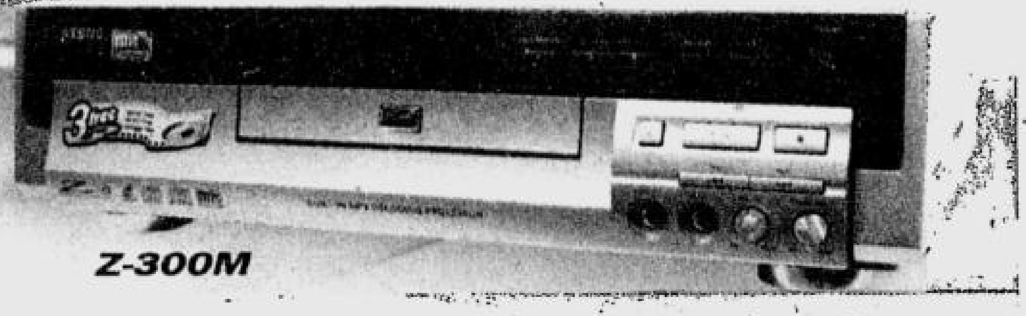


NON-STOP Jamming

MP3
KARAOKE
SCORING
VCD
AUDIO CD

SAMSUNG

VCD DJtize It!



Z-300M

Pure **entertainment**
in a flick of a finger.
It's that simple and easy with **Samsung VCD.**
Watch **movies...** listen to **music...**
sing-along... and get a **score**.
You can *do* all these **NON-STOP!**
in the **comfort** of your homes.
Having **Samsung VCD** is like having a *virtual DJ*
catering to your every request.
That's **VERSATILITY** at its **best**.

Available Models

S series
Video CD (ver 2.0)
FULL KARAOKE FUNCTION
PLUS SCORING
Z-100S 1 cd changer
Z-300S 3 cd changer

M series
Video CD (ver 2.0)
FULL KARAOKE FUNCTION
WITH MP3 PLAYBACK
Z-100M 1 cd changer
Z-300M 3 cd changer

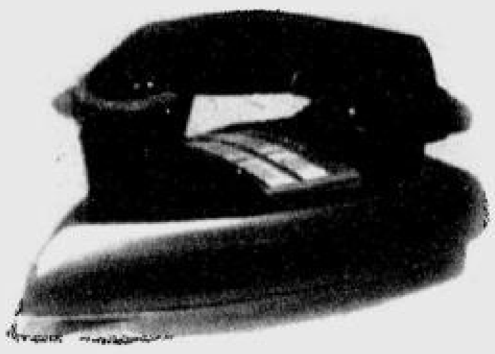
SAMSUNG DIGITall
everyone's invited

AFFORD-A-BUYS

16" iMax
Stand Fan

P1,050

HANABISHI

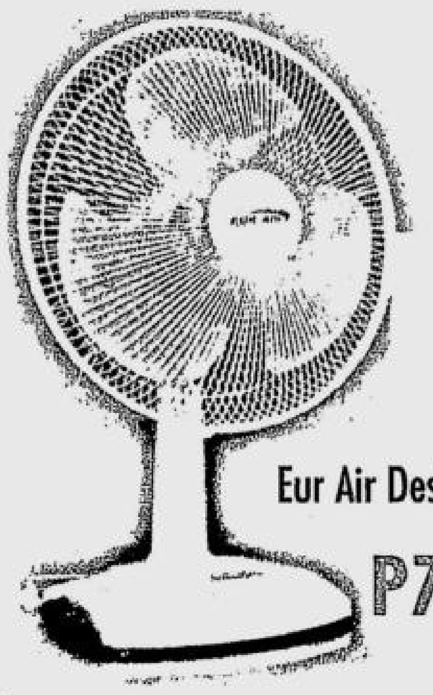


Flat Iron

P360

Ikeru Wall Clock

P130



Eur Air Deskfan

P715

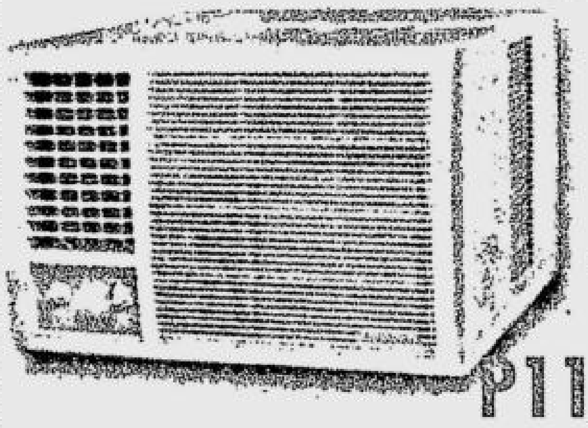
JVC

14" MTS Stereo CTV
w/ picture booster

P7,990

Kelvinator

1 HP window-type
aircon



P11,895

with
FREE
T-shirt

20" Stereo CTV

P7,995

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What a scene-stealer.

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- Incredible Picture •
- Incredible Surround •
- Anti Reflection Coating •
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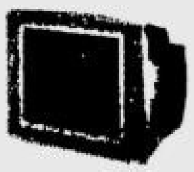
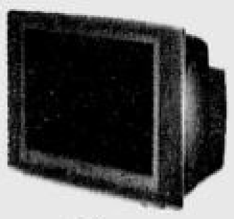
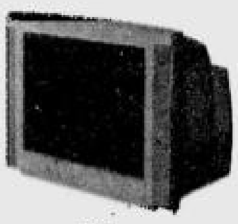


21"

MATCHLINE



29"



29"
POWERVISION

CONGRATULATIONS to Western Marketing P. Tuazon Branch on its Grand Re-opening!